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MEMOIR  
OF  
MARY CAPPER

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MARY CAPPER.

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A MEMOIR  
OF  
MARY CAPPER,  
LATE OF BIRMINGHAM,  
A MINISTER OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

*(Abridged from the 8vo. Edition.)*

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“The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more  
and more unto the perfect day.” Prov. iv., 18.

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LONDON:  
A. W. BENNETT, BISHOPSGATE-STREET, WITHOUT.  
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1860.



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## ADVERTISEMENT.

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Several applications having been made to the editor of the Memoir of Mary Capper for an abridgement of the work, it is now offered to the public, in the hope that it may answer the desire of such as have wished for a manual adapted to the young ; that large and interesting class for whose welfare many a prayer ascends.

*Darlington, 1860.*



## PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

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THE journals and other papers of Mary Capper were entrusted by herself to the care and revision of the editor, with the understanding that any use might be made of them which, after her decease, should appear to be right. The present compilation is, in consequence, now offered to the public, with the hope that the cause of truth and righteousness—that cause which was so dear to the subject of this memoir through a long life, may be served thereby.

The character of Mary Capper is pretty fully developed in the subsequent pages; yet it may be allowed to the editor, who had the privilege of near intimacy with her for almost half a century, to remark, that in preparing this work for the press, and consequently dwelling much on the life and conversation of this devotedly pious individual, she has been particularly impressed with the cheerful con-

tentment of spirit, manifested under the varying circumstances of her life. This is the more striking when the feebleness of her bodily powers, the enlarged liberality of her mind, and her deep feeling for human sorrows, are taken into account, together with her limited pecuniary resources and small personal accommodations. It is true, she was often entrusted with the means of relieving those in distress, which was to her a source of genuine delight; but she steadfastly refused repeated offers of increased comforts for herself; preferring to dwell in comparative obscurity, and in the close vicinity of those dear friends whose society and kindness had largely contributed, for a long course of years, to her enjoyment. Another object which she had in view was, to be so situated as to occasion, to such friends as might be passing through the town, little inconvenience in paying her a visit; for such was her modest estimate of her own attainments, that she could not suppose her friends would incline, or could suitably be expected to come far to make her a call.

Many, however, as will be seen in the following pages, could bear their testimony to the solid satisfaction which such visits afforded

them ; and this undoubtedly proceeded from the conviction, that the chief pursuit of Mary Capper's life had been to honour her Lord and Master ; by this she gave the strongest proof of her gratitude for the love of God, extended to her in Jesus Christ her Saviour ; whose peace was richly shed abroad in her heart, and more especially so as she approached his heavenly kingdom, where all is peace and love and joy in the Holy Ghost, and that for ever !

KATHARINE BACKHOUSE.

Darlington, 1847.



# CONTENTS.

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	Page.
CHAPTER I.	
Parentage—Education, &c. ....	1
CHAPTER II.	
Sojourn in France .....	16
CHAPTER III.	
Return home in 1777, and memoranda during her stay there—Removal to Wilmington, and Journal while there in 1781 and 1782. ....	69
CHAPTER IV.	
Residence in London till 1788—Removal to Birmingham—Death of her mother in 1793. ....	85
CHAPTER V.	
Labours in the Ministry for 33 years—Visit to Warwick Jail—Extracts from Diary, &c.—Gentle decline and close of life. ....	103





# MEMOIR OF MARY CAPPER.

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## CHAPTER I.

### PARENTAGE, EDUCATION, &c.

MARY CAPPER was born on the 11th of the 4th month, 1755. She was the daughter of William and Rebecca Capper, of Rugeley, in Staffordshire. They had a very numerous family, consisting of ten sons, and four daughters; some of whom lived to advanced age.

John, their first-born, was a merchant in London, where he died in 1835, after completing his 88th year; James also died the same year in that city, at the age of eighty one; having been, during 50 years, Rector of Wilmington, Sussex.

The whole family were brought up by their parents as members of the Episcopal Church, to which they themselves were conscientiously attached.

Mary, the subject of the following Memoir, possessed a mind of no ordinary description; energetic and contemplative, she seemed peculiarly prepared, as Divine Grace was allowed to operate upon her gifted mind, to throw aside the prejudices of education, and to stem the torrent of opposing opinion.

Her susceptible heart was, however, keenly

alive to the sorrows of others, and deep were her sufferings, when, for a time, her religious views broke the harmony of the domestic circle ; but having taken up the cross of Christ, she was mercifully enabled to follow her Lord in simple obedience, and in full reliance upon his power to preserve and strengthen her through every trial.

Much of the account of her childhood was penned after she had attained the age of eighty years ; and a more lively description cannot be given to the reader than in her own words.

“ My dear parents,” she writes, “ accustomed their children to read the Scriptures. The religious instruction of my childhood was, I think, received from my dear mother. O ! she was a deeply tried christian mother.

I think that it was about my tenth year that I was sent to my aunt Langford, at Macclesfield, in Cheshire. She was a serious member of the National Establishment, a very respectable, widowed gentlewoman. Under her kind care, I was instructed in the strict observance of religious forms ; to remember the text of every sermon that I heard ; to write the collects, &c., but I do not recollect much serious impression being made on my mind. About this time there was a great talk about Methodism ; our relations, the Rows, of Macclesfield,\* were said to have turned Methodists, and were lightly spoken of and ridiculed. I well remember that I felt sorry for this ; because I thought, if they were good

One of these was H. A. Rogers, of whom an instructive little memoir is published.—Ed.

people, and only differed from others in the way that they thought was right, they ought to be loved.

I was allowed to go, with my young companions, to the theatre, and various other places of amusement; and I do not recollect that any remark was made, upon time being thus squandered and mis-spent.

On my return home, some domestic changes had taken place; my second brother, Samuel, was settled in business at Birmingham; and, as he was still young, it was considered best for my father to be much with him; so that my dear mother was frequently left with my eldest brother, John, and the younger children, at Rugeley. Nursing and needlework were my proper employments, but I was fond of active play; out-doing my companions at ball, jumping, sliding, &c."

The following extracts from a diary kept by Mary Capper, about this period, show the manner in which her time was chiefly occupied, and the unfoldings of her youthful mind.

"9th. My friend K. Barbor drank tea with me. How delightful and improving is the company of a good and worthy friend! I think I have read that friendship is too noble a passion for female minds; but why so? Have we not souls as well as men? and as capable of the worthiest attainments.

10th. Went to prayers with Mrs. Barbor; a truly good woman.

17th. I have been out four days together;

this will never do, therefore I must turn over a new leaf.

18th. At home all day, and very industrious, as though I was resolved to make amends for my former loss of time; but I don't much like all work and no play.

6th. Paid a morning visit to Mrs. Parks; please to observe, I took my work with me.

13th. Mamma and sister arrived well.

15th. My brother prevailed upon Mamma to stay till to-morrow. I am grieved at the thoughts of leaving the country, just now that everything is in perfection, to go and bury one's self in Birmingham, where one does not feel a refreshing breeze, nor see a green leaf, except a few nasty withered things in the church yard, once in the year. I have not patience to think of it! but parents must be obeyed.

17th. Got safe to Birmingham.

7th. I went in the evening to Mr. Bralesford's, to be examined by the Rev. Mr. Nicklin.

8th. Went to church; we were very fortunate, as we got there before it was much crowded, when we were confirmed. I walked with Miss Freer, in a very grave and serious humour."

Respecting this circumstance she subsequently remarks, "At a suitable age, with great seriousness, and heart-contriting impressions, I went through the ceremony of confirmation by the Bishop; a ceremony of no small import in my view; as what had been promised for me by my sponsors, I was, in accordance with this outward rite, bound to perform, as then of age to take

the responsibility myself; viz., to deny all pomp and vanity; to walk in God's holy will and commandments all the days of my life.—Knowing that I came very short of this, I was distressed, and mourned much in secret. I was afraid to mention my feelings, as they seemed strange, and I did not know of any one who had the like.

10th. Mamma, &c., came from Rugeley.

11th. Sister Rebecca and I were at the play, with Mr. Nicklin and brother Jasper.

13th. A very good sermon, by the Rev. Mr. Nicklin.

14th. Mamma told me of a fault in my behaviour, a repetition of which I will endeavour to avoid.

November 10th. Received a very polite invitation from Miss Capper, to spend a few days at Castle Bromwich.

14th. Arrived there.

19th. I do not know the meaning of it, but I never in my life wished more sincerely to be at home.

21st. Mrs. Capper is so kind as to promise to take me to Birmingham on Monday. I shall be heartily glad when I get into Bull Street.

23rd. Set out for home with a joyful heart. My father received a sensible and dutiful letter from Jasper. O! how my father's eye glistened with true paternal tenderness! That we may all unite, and strive to give joy to the hearts of our worthy parents, is, and shall be my constant prayer."

The following letter was addressed to Mary Capper by her mother, when left on one occasion as housekeeper at Birmingham :—

“ April 17th, 1769.

My dear Molly,

You are a good girl for writing, agreeable to promise, every week ; pray continue to do so. I observed what you said about Miss Freer's riding-dress ; but, my dear child, consider you are not Miss Freer, but one of number twelve ; therefore, no superfluities can or ought to be expected. I was much pleased with one of your letters, wherein you say, ‘ I have been strongly solicited to go out this evening, but have withstood the temptation.’ O ! my dear girl, may you have grace to withstand every temptation to evil, or imprudent things ; and that you may be able to say, ‘ Get thee behind me, Satan ! for I am resolved already ; and my Jesus, who vanquished thee upon the cross, will assist my weakness, and enable me to overcome thy temptations !’ Assist and enable us He will, whenever we call sincerely upon Him ; and I doubt not, my dear child, you have already experienced a pleasing satisfaction whenever you have denied yourself any amusement, though innocent, if it interfered with what was right and necessary to be done.

Your mother,

REBECCA CAPPER.”

In adverting to these days, M. C. writes, “ I

was, at times, and many times in early life very thoughtful as to the genuine effect of religion on the mind. My constitution was weak, which I have considered one among other favours; for my nature was volatile, and I was much left as to outward restraints, and, indeed, urged to go to public amusements, plays, dances, &c., which were considered innocent. The first contrary impression that I distinctly remember was once, whilst on my knees, at my accustomed evening prayers; my thoughts being confused and dissipated, I lay down comfortless, believing that whatever distracted and hindered prayer must be wrong. This impression rested with me; and from time to time, led to deep reflection and secret conflict. The witness for truth left me not; and as little sacrifices, such as declining gay parties, seemed to yield a peaceful calm, I was favoured with resolution to persevere. O! how I wept over my dear mother's letter, though she knew not all the temptations I was subjected to. One occasion, I think, I cannot forget, because it is sealed by mercy and by experience to this day; though the thing was, in itself, comparatively little, and I was then young. Being tempted to take some fruit, in a garden where I was unobserved, and being on the point of gathering it, a sudden check arrested me. I cannot distinctly describe it, but I walked, from the spot with a sweetness of inward peace indescribable, such as I think I had never before known; and it arose in my heart, and has remained in my understanding,



this is the teaching of the grace of God ; or, in other words, of the Holy Spirit ! This, we had been taught to believe, would enable us to overcome evil ; but it is not sufficiently understood ; and when gently developed in the still, small-voice, it is frequently not obeyed ; and the quick sense of its secret monitions becomes less discernible.

External objects, and the too general example of Christian professors, entangle and allure the mind ; the doctrine of the Cross of Christ, or the self-denial thereby taught, is rarely brought into view ; or possibly, little understood, farther than as regards strictly moral conduct, and a due observance of religious institutes. This I write, not uncharitably, nor by way of censure. Ah ! no ; I was favoured with a sense of good, under such restraints as these, before I underwent the ceremony of confirmation ; and for several years after this, during many little fluctuations in the domestic arrangements, I continued serious, and given to retirement. O ! how would the enemy of all good, sometimes come in like a flood, and almost terrify me with evil thoughts and suggestions. It would be vain to attempt setting forth the hidden striving of nature with the light which manifests the evil, separating the precious from the vile. I was not obstinately rebellious, though my temper was naturally hasty and impatient. On some occasions, my brother James was a gentle reprover, and was in example, kind. In after years, he became my advocate

as a Christian brother; for he believed me sincere, though his religious views were not in accordance with mine.

My brother John married and settled at Rugeley, after which event the rest of the family went to reside at Birmingham with our parents."

This brings us to a new era in the domestic circle to which M. C. makes some allusion in mentioning the change which afterwards took place in her religious views; and as this change of view and practice first became obvious in her brother Jasper, a few particulars relating to him may here be acceptable to the reader, and useful, as a connecting link in the history of M. C.

He was about four years older than she was, and tenderly attached to her. When quite young, he was sensible of the quickening influence of the Holy Spirit visiting his soul, and it became his practice reverently to read a portion of the Holy Scriptures before he left his room in a morning. On these occasions he frequently sat for a time in silence, in order to wait upon Him, who, he felt persuaded, alone could open the sacred writings to his understanding. While a young man, he accompanied his brother James, (who was about to take orders as a clergyman) to London; and during their stay there, they called upon Mary Knowles, who was an acquaintance of the family.\* On being informed of James's prospects, she gave them a description

\* As there is frequent mention made of this individual in the narrative, it may not be irrelevant to remark, that

of the qualification which she deemed essential to a true minister of the gospel. This address, while it produced little effect upon the mind of James, sank deeply into that of Jasper, and he was, in consequence, induced to go to a Friends' meeting. Farther reflection, enquiry, and conviction were the means of attracting him very closely to this religious society; but he had much suffering to pass through, in various ways, before he became a member of it.

His parents, who appear scarcely to have considered the Society of Friends to be Christians, from partaking in an ignorance of their principles which was then very prevalent, were, of course, much opposed to his being united to such a body; and his father treated him with a severity which was cause of great sorrow to his affectionate heart; yet he was enabled to continue firm in what he saw to be required of him. He obtained some employment in London, where he was kindly noticed by a few Friends, and the

she was eminent for her great intellectual powers, and for her taste and skill in painting and in needlework; in which art she excelled in her imitations of nature. Her conversational powers were so great, and so peculiarly fascinating, that her company was much sought, and she was thereby induced to mix unprofitably, with many worldly-minded persons, to her own great loss. She outlived her husband many years, and attained to advanced age. As she drew near the close of life, she was, through mercy, permitted a long illness, during which she was made to feel the burden of sin, and to lament over her mis-spent time and mis-applied talents; and there is reason to hope that the cry of her penitent spirit was heard, and that she was made a partaker of the salvation which is in Christ.

house of John Fry, in Whitechapel, was always open to him.

One day, while he was in much distress, on account of his father's objecting to assist, or even to see him, he went to J. Fry's, and found several Friends assembled; among whom was Barbara Drewry, who was engaged in religious testimony. He quietly took his seat near the door of the room; when, without knowing any thing of his situation, she addressed him very remarkably: expressing her apprehension that he was under great conflict respecting some requiring of duty; and her full belief that, if he became obedient to the will of the Lord therein, though he might be called upon to give up all that was most dear to him, and every prospect of outward advantage, yet the Lord would abundantly recompense him, and would ultimately bless him, not only with spiritual, but with temporal increase. This proved to him like a brook by the way, and contributed to strengthen his resolution to make surrender of his all to Divine disposal. Being fully convinced of the necessity of a truly religious life, he soon became sensible of a sincere desire for the best welfare of his dear connexions, and he ventured to write to his sister Mary, endeavouring to awaken in her mind a serious concern for her eternal salvation. This letter, however, failed in producing the effect designed, and he received from his sister an answer which was very unsatisfactory to him; the following is extracted from his reply to it.

## " TO MISS CAPPER, BIRMINGHAM.

London, 28th September, 1776.

Dear Sister,

It is not my intention to enter into a religious controversy, or to persuade you or any one (for I have not myself been persuaded) into my errors of judgment; if, as you say, I have blindly and enthusiastically fallen into them; but on the contrary, would gladly acknowledge my weakness and be thankful to be set right. I desire to ask you this question; by what standard did you examine my letter? Not by the doctrine of our Saviour and his apostles I am convinced, or you could not have accused me of enthusiasm; for, as I understand the word, enthusiasm is a mistaken zeal; but where zeal is directed by truths handed down for our direction, it cannot be too fervent. Our misfortune is, we cannot always maintain such a zeal. If you call it a fit because it is a frame of mind which I am likely to fall from, I agree to it; but this is owing to my own weakness, and for want of steadfast faith and trust in Him who would support me; but to prove that I was, at the time of writing to you, under proper impressions, could I constantly maintain them, they would not only warm my heart with a continual sense of the gratitude due to my Redeemer, but render it impossible for me to do any one an injury, or fall into the least sin. Ought then these impressions to be stifled? or ought we not rather to press after them?

If I remember right, I addressed myself to your heart before, but you have answered me in haste, and I am sensible never asked your poor heart one question about it ; but in the strength of your own reason you have confided, and I will endeavour to prove that you have trusted to a broken reed ; therefore answer me a question ; and if your heart does not give it the negative, then ask yourself, if you do not deny your Redeemer, by making the Gospel of none effect. Did your heart assent to this assertion in your letter ? viz that you ‘look upon a sincere, humble, and uniform adherence to the rules of moral duties as the substance of our faith and doctrine.’ Surely not ! for this excludes Christianity ; as it is possible to be a strict moralist without one grain of true religion ; for many of the Heathens were so, and even Atheists may be so.

Our blessed Saviour himself condemned the Scribes and Pharisees, who were strictly moral ; they carried themselves uprightly as to their moral characters, and were looked upon by the world as the best of men ; they fasted twice in the week, and were not (as one of them said) extortioners, unjust, &c. and they gave tithes of all they possessed ; yet what does the Lord, who knew their hearts, call them ? Hypocrites, who prayed to God with their lips, but whose hearts were far from Him !

How is it frequently with us ? are not you and I like unto them ?

If I have advanced anything in my letter

which is unscriptural, point it out to me ; if not, how is it enthusiasm ?

If we believe that we ' must one day give an account of every idle word ; ' and that, ' whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we must do all for the glory of God, ' (which we must believe, or deny our professed faith,) can we watch too narrowly over ourselves ? or endeavour, too carefully, to avoid what may tend in the least to alienate our affections from the things which are above ?

' To enjoy is to obey. ' Was our Saviour sent upon earth as a pattern for us ? Did He enjoy the good things of this life in the manner you speak of ? We are told to use the things of this life so as not to abuse them, but never to rejoice in them, that I remember. When the Apostles were beaten, and departed from the presence of the council rejoicing, was it enjoying the good things of this life ? No ! it was rejoicing in the Lord ; and I believe, that to enjoy his presence, we must obey his leadings. Read the first chapter of John, and tell me what you can make of it, without this belief. In the Epistle to the Corinthians, the ministers of God are spoken of ' as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing. ' Were not these, think you, called by those who did not listen to them, a morose set of fellows ? Yet, were they not enjoying and obeying ? Thus it is with almost all religious people.

I shall not wish for quite so sudden an answer as to my last, but one more to the matter, and honestly produced by serious judgment ; a little

farther from the surface than your other, My intention was, not to accuse nor to dictate, but to warm you with a desire to enquire after these things.

In true brotherly love, being sensible of my own errors, from a very sinful neglect,

Your true friend and affectionate brother,  
JASPER CAPPER."

No remark is preserved respecting the effect of this letter on Mary Capper's mind, but it appears to have induced her to reflect very seriously upon her own condition, and to make some enquiry into the faith and practice of the Society to which her brother had become so much attached. She was, at that time, in very delicate health, and her parents resolved (probably under the influence of various motives) to place her in a family in France, for a time.

On this account she was brought into new and trying circumstances; and it is thought that copious extracts from her journal at that time, will not be without interest in many ways: especially to those in early life, who will see that she possessed a very lively imagination and warm feelings; and who may, by the perusal, be the better prepared to appreciate the sacrifices which she had afterward to make, in order to obtain peace of mind, and to become the humble disciple of a crucified Lord.



## CHAPTER II.

### SOJOURN IN FRANCE.

“Birmingham, October 19th, 1776.

Very busy making preparations to set out for London, in the diligence, to-morrow morning, with Mr. and Miss Bingham; the latter purposing to accompany me to Paris, or some other part of France, where I am going for the recovery of my health, which has been upon the decline for some months.

London, Tuesday 21st.—Just arrived at the Castle and Falcon; much fatigued, having travelled all night without sleep. We arrived at Stratford at ten o'clock, and there met with several of Bingham's friends, who were at the inn; we supped together very jovially, after which we resumed our journey with fresh spirits; indeed, we then stood in need of our best courage, for it was very dark and the roads bad; this, with the fears that we had of being robbed, was dismal enough. Just as morning began to dawn we reached Oxford; the daylight advanced with all the beautiful attendants of a fine morn, and it was most delightfully pleasant. Breakfasted at Tetsworth; and heartily rejoiced we were, for we were really hungry. I bore the journey better than I could have imagined; after paying proper attention to the bread and butter, we once again set forward; it was a glorious

day, and the country appeared beautiful, in spite of the rigorous season. Immediately on my arrival at my journey's end, I wrote to my brother Jasper, and he came half an hour after. I fainted several times, which is not surprising, as I was much fatigued.

Wednesday, 22nd. Was taken to bed last night very ill. My affectionate brother, who had never seen me in that way before, was quite alarmed, and sent for Dr. Knowles. I have slept tolerably. Walked with my brother and my friend Bingham, into Cheapside. Dined with my uncle Smallwood, and spent a rational, agreeable evening with Dr. and Mrs. Knowles, at their house in Ingram Court. I admire the doctor more, I think, than any man I ever met with. He strikes me as a man of learning and affability; polite without ceremony; perfectly good humoured without the least tincture of levity; charitable to all, in thought, word, and deed. It is easy to imagine that no one could possess all these qualities without being, in the true sense of the word, a Christian. Though the doctor is, by profession, a Quaker, he is far from endeavouring to influence the judgment of others. We had much serious conversation, and my heart felt interested in every word that fell from the mouth of the worthy doctor. I wish, if my stay in town permits, frequently to repeat these visits. I do not wonder at my dear Jasper, being impatient to introduce me into such company, as he knew my inclinations too well to suppose that I should find it irksome.

I wish I could prevail on all my acquaintance to lay aside all their trivial ways of killing time, by playing at cards and such diversions ; and in their room, to institute improving, rational conversation ; it would undoubtedly be better for society in general ; we should then enjoy ourselves in reality. How far more praiseworthy those are who spend their time in searching after and admiring the wonderful power and goodness of the Almighty, than such as think of little but the gratification of the senses ; who scarcely know or consider how or wherefore this grand universe is supported, or whether governed by a Supreme, All-powerful Being !

Nancy Fry, a very pleasing young person, drank tea with us ; I was struck with her appearance and wish to be better acquainted.

The doctor does not approve of my intention of going into a convent, as he thinks I shall be in great danger of having my sentiments as to religion totally changed ; he remarked that the transition of our form of worship to that of the Romish Church was very trifling, and might possibly be brought about, almost imperceptibly, as they spare no pains to gain a proselyte. This has quite unsettled my designs, as I would by no means throw myself into the midst of dangers, the nature of which I am entirely unacquainted with. We took our leave of these worthy friends, with a promise, willingly made on my part, to dine with them on Friday, if nothing prevent.

Thursday, 23rd. My brother Jasper called

and took us to dine with my brother William, who lives with Mr. Railton, Holborn Bridge. Railton appears to be a sensible worthy character. After we had had coffee, we called a coach, intending to go and spend the evening with my uncle Capper, in Berkeley Square; but an unaccountable whim entering the head of my brother William, (prompted, I make no doubt, by his wish to give us pleasure,) he asked if we should have any objection to see the Beggars' Opera, to be performed that night. I was inclined to refuse; but fancying that my friend had a desire to hear Miss Catley, I accompanied her without reluctance. My disappointment and disgust are not to be described; I had heard much of the shining qualities of Miss Catley, and therefore expected something extraordinary; but of all the figures I ever saw, she is the most miserable; and her impudence is inconceivable. In the midst of my chagrin, I could not help feeling emotions of pity for the poor unhappy wretch, who, in her serious moments, must call to mind a life spent in such a manner; how melancholy a retrospect! I may truly say, my intended pleasure was turned into actual pain. I was very ill afterwards.

Friday, 24th. My brother Jasper called upon me; he was not pleased at my last night's expedition; in truth I was vexed at myself. I could not help making a comparison between the different feelings with which I retired to rest last evening and the night before; one all hurry and confusion, without one rational idea;

the other calm, serene, and pleasing; with a train of ideas, delightful, quiet, and composed. I very joyfully performed my promise of spending the day in Ingram Court, and it was as agreeable as I expected. The doctor was at home all the afternoon, and we had much serious conversation, in which my heart was interested, the doctor and his wife explained the benefit arising from silent meetings, which I am convinced must be very great; we are then freed from all external objects, and wait upon the Lord in silent submission; which must doubtless be a far more acceptable sacrifice than those forms of prayer that are repeated by the lips when the spirit is far from God. This silent meditation is certainly an excellent preparation for vocal prayer.

Saturday, 25th. Nancy Fry called, and went with us to a Mr. Williamson's, a person who keeps bees in a glass hive; it is very entertaining to see these industrious little creatures all busied in their various occupations.

Sunday, 26th. Went, with my brother Jasper, to the Quakers' meeting, and was exceedingly pleased with one of the female preachers. There was silence nearly an hour and a half, in which time I was prepared to receive instruction, and I felt the force of what I heard. Returned to our lodgings well satisfied with silent worship.

27th. Bingham purposes going to speak to a Miss Nicholls, a young person who is going into a convent at Boulogne. Dined and spent a very agreeable day with Nancy Fry's parents, in Whitechapel. I admire the whole family exceed-

ingly ; such marks of sincerity and friendly civility I scarcely ever received. I shall actually venerate this society of people ; for among those that I am acquainted with, there reigns such a universal spirit of affection, with a real desire to please, that I cannot help being strongly attached to those sentiments which are productive of these social delights ; to me far more engaging than the pompous parade that attends the proudly great.

29th. Mr. Bingham and my brother went with us to the Tower, in order to look at the vessel in which we propose embarking ; the Captain is an elderly polite man ; he informed us that his daughter would accompany us to Boulogne, where his family resides. He could not say when he should sail ; as there are press warrants out, a protection is necessary, or it is possible that all the men may be taken. On expressing our desire to see the curiosities in the Tower, our obliging conductors willingly complied ; and being informed that there were no beasts worth seeing, the old lion, &c., being gone to the shades of their noble ancestors, we visited the Arsenal. I was much pleased with the regular form in which all the arms are placed. Could the mind be divested of the idea of destruction, for which these weapons are designed, it would be possible to behold with pleasing astonishment, the perfection which has been arrived at in the manufacture. On our return we had some conversation with two young girls who had just come from the Ursuline Convent at Boulogne,

and were not discouraged by their account. About five o'clock I took leave of my friend, as I had accepted of Mrs. Morris's invitation to spend a few days with her at Tottenham. She received me with that good nature and affability which characterise her. I cannot but spend my time agreeably here, as in the company of Mrs. Knowles and Mrs. Morris, it is impossible to be otherwise than happy. Very poorly and retired to rest early; Mary Booth, an agreeable girl, was my companion.\*

Friday, 31st. Poorly all day. Mrs. Knowles was so obliging as to read in the life of William Penn, an eminent Quaker, who suffered much from persecution, being imprisoned and cruelly treated on account of his religious views and practices. He bore all with fortitude! supported by the true spirit of Christianity, he overcame all difficulties.

Tuesday, November 4th. In tolerable health and spirits; have fainted but twice since Saturday. We had company to dinner. Friends, a new married couple! The more I see of these people, the more I admire them. They receive each other with such marks of sincere love and friendship that my heart partakes in their apparent satisfaction. Spent the afternoon in serious conversation.

5th. Read part of the Life of George Fox, and found myself interested in his sentiments, which appear to me noble, and full of weight. I quit these kind friends to-morrow.

\* Mary Booth was afterwards the wife of John Fell.

6th. Dined with Nancy Fry at her father's, and slept in Ingram Court.

Friday, 7th. Very poorly; soon after breakfast my friend Bingham and a daughter of Mr. Powell's, called on me to go on board the vessel, but the Captain was unable to sail on account of the fog.

8th. We embarked on board "The Four Friends," Captain Merriton, accompanied by my brother Jasper. Our fellow-passengers appear tolerably agreeable.

11th. After a very tedious passage, landed at Boulogne, surrounded by a number of strange creatures; but my attention was fixed upon two delicate figures, dressed most fantastically, 'far beneath that creature man, who is so proud of being rational!' Their coats were blue and purple, and their hats covered with various coloured feathers; a delicate tincture of rouge, and an enormously large muff completed the whole. A polite Englishman stepped from amid the throng, and we willingly permitted him to conduct us to the 'Ville de Londres,' a poor, dirty inn compared with English houses. After dinner we walked in the town. I admire the dress of the tradespeople, which has an air of decent simplicity, but what appeared the most diverting and extraordinary was that all men and women, rich and poor, each had a muff; it was very droll to see a miserable creature in rags and wooden clogs, with a large muff.

12th. Between eight and nine o'clock, we were surprised by the entrance of an old dame,



pale and meagre as an inhabitant of the grave, attended by two or three young girls. After our astonishment had a little subsided, and the ladies were seated, we took the liberty of enquiring from what cause proceeded the honour of this early visit ; which in reality, gave us no satisfaction, as we were not dressed, having only left our beds a few minutes before. They, however, made no apology for throwing us into such consternation, but informed us that they were come for two young ladies, who came over with the intention of entering the Convent. Poor Nicholls and Powell did not seem over pleased with the appearance of their future companions ; however, they agreed to wait upon them after dinner ; upon which they rose and took their leave.

A little after four o'clock, we attended our fellow travellers to the Ursuline Convent, and delivered them into the hands of six nuns, who were dressed perfectly neat and plain. We were informed that the Pensioners rise at five o'clock all the year. To breakfast is not the custom of the country ; but at ten o'clock, they dine upon soup, with a morsel of coarse beef, boiled to strings. This is served in a manner by no means elegant. After this frugal repast, they are occupied in studies until five o'clock. Their supper is roasted meat ; with a salad when the season permits. The hour of rest is seven. These particulars did not give my friend and me any strong desire to join them ; and what weighs still more with us is, that we should be under

the necessity of submitting to all their customs and superstitions. They have mostly fifteen prayers each day, which would be a burden to those who do not imagine that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Returned to our Auberge, and gave up all thoughts of entering a convent.

13th. Are at a loss how to dispose of ourselves, as our convent scheme is quite out of the question. My brother has a letter from a friend in London to a Mrs. Thomas, which he is gone to deliver, and we wait the issue.—In half an hour after my brother's return, we received an invitation to drink tea with the lady. We found her alone; she received us with the politeness of a native, and assured us that she would do all in her power to serve us.

14th. Called on our friends in their prison, as it may justly be termed; we were only allowed to speak to them through an iron grate; poor Powell appeared dissatisfied with her situation, though she was obliged to put on her best looks, and say that she liked it very well, as the Governess who was with them understands English. We returned to the inn by the ramparts, which command an extensive view of the sea, and of distant hills, woods, and villages. I observed a large crucifix, placed on an eminence in the middle of the town, and was informed that the people, on certain days, flock in great numbers, to offer their prayers before this figure. Surely this is a zealous blindness, which raises compassion in a thinking mind.

Just after dinner, as we were peaceably seated at work, in flew Mrs. Thomas, almost out of breath with impatience, to inform us that we were the luckiest girls in the world; that she had procured a place for us which could not be disagreeable, as the lady keeps a coach, lives in genteel style, &c., &c., all which she related in such haste that we scarcely knew what to think; but collecting a little presence of mind we begged her to be seated, that we might talk the matter coolly over. To-morrow she will accompany us to Madame Brunet, the lady in question.

15th. Mrs. Thomas conducted us to one of the best looking houses in Boulogne, situated near the ramparts, in the High Town. We were introduced, by a smart footman, into a pretty parlour; and after a few minutes, Madame Brunet made her appearance, in a neat morning dress. I was much pleased with her, and we soon fixed upon terms. She was on the point of going to spend some time at her house in the country, and she said the coach should come to the inn for us, in the course of two hours. We have therefore settled all, and are in readiness.

Herdington, Sunday, 16th of November, 1776. We had an exceedingly pleasant ride last night to this, the country residence of Monsieur Brunet; it is fifteen miles from Boulogne; the roads are good, being paved with broad flat stones. The noise of the carriage in the court brought the whole family to the door. Bingham and I looked like walking statues, as we understood not a word that was addressed to us. Madame

Brunet speaks English, which will be a great relief to us. The family consists of Monsieur and Madame Brunet, Monsieur Dupont, a relation, (neither young nor handsome,) two lovely little girls, and a boy about twelve years old: they all look agreeable. After tea we went to choose our chambers; it is a large handsome house, with numberless apartments. We had a very genteel supper, of various dishes. The French are, in general, very early risers; I hope we shall follow this good example. This morning we were down stairs at half past seven o'clock. Madame Brunet takes tea for breakfast, which is pleasant. The family went to mass, about a mile distant. We had an elegant dinner; I admire some of the French customs, but cannot say I am enchanted with their manner of eating. In the afternoon we rode round the village; the situation is delightful; pleasing and extensive prospects, and woods and purling streams in abundance. There are two well-built houses near Monsieur Brunet's; one of them inhabited by a sister of Madame Brunet, so that Bingham and I pleased ourselves with the thoughts of having an agreeable neighbour; but we were informed that the families did not visit; for reasons best known to themselves! The other house belongs to a connexion of the same family; they, therefore, have dropped all acquaintance. How distressing it must be, to hearts that have ever known affection, to be thus at variance! On our return, we were astonished to see the card table set out; we were solicited to play,

but declined, and retired to our chamber, where we found much more real satisfaction.

17th. Spent the morning in studying the French grammar, the afternoon in writing. Played at cards in the evening, which I am sorry to find is to be our general custom; it is a very irksome thing to me; but Mr. Brunet being extravagantly fond of it, I comply with his humour, much against my own. It is here looked upon as a necessary part of polite education.

20th. Monsieur Dupont took us to a manufactory just by, to see them blow glass; we were much entertained at the droll appearance of our gentleman, who was dressed in almost the shabbiest coat I ever saw, the tattered remains of a fine waistcoat, a bag wig, a very large muff, and to complete all, on the crown of his head, was a delicate little cap of white woollen cloth, edged with gold; 'to be sure, there never was a more laughable figure! I was fatigued, and so exhausted that I fainted on my return; the whole family were very kind.

21st. Rose early, quite recovered. Most tempestuous weather; many of the poor are great sufferers from the high winds, some of their habitations being laid level with the earth; indeed, they are not calculated to stand against a storm, being made of nothing but a sort of clay and sticks. The lower sort of people live miserably in this country; they are in general very idle, and consequently very poor; and their religion rather encourages their natural antipathy to labour.

22nd. Fridays and Saturdays we have no flesh meat, which they pretend is a mortification of the body ; but for my own part, I cannot consider it any merit to abstain from meat, when the whole art of cookery is exerted to prepare fish, roots, &c., in the nicest manner.

Sunday 23rd. The whole family at mass : as the road to their place of worship is too bad for the coach, my friend and I have not the opportunity of going with them. I know not whether I ought to regret this as a great misfortune ; for I should possibly be under the necessity of submitting to their ceremonies ; at the same time I feel a longing desire to join in the assemblies of the faithful. From an idea of politeness the family desisted from cards ; but what was more disagreeable to us, as it prevented our retiring, an optic glass was produced, in order, as they said, to amuse us without wounding our consciences ; but they know not our real sentiments. Madame Brunet gave us an interesting description of one of her sisters, who is a lady of the bon ton ; so much so, that she would certainly die at the vulgar thought of living in the same house with her husband ; her nerves are too delicate to endure the noise of drawing a cork from a bottle ; a spider or any other poor innocent insect, produces violent agitation, and her time is spent in bed, in visiting, &c. . With all these absurdities Mrs. Brunet says she has fine abilities, great learning and very elegant accomplishments. How far more happy are those who have only bread to eat and raiment to put on, than this

rich Extravagant, who torments herself with endeavouring to find happiness in the vanities of the world.

24th. I think I never heard the wind so high as last night; the window shutters made such a loud noise that Bingham and I imagined that the house was beset with robbers, who were firing guns; so we rose and called my brother to protect us. He convinced us of the real cause of our alarm, so that we retired with courage. The rest of the family slept so soundly that they heard nothing.

I greatly admire the method by which Mrs. Brunet teaches her little girls to read. She has upwards of two thousand cards, upon each of which is written some sentence, or remarkable event in history; the children learn these, and it is done in so easy a manner that it appears more like play than instruction.

Wednesday, 26th. A great feast; the family at mass. We walked out but were glad to return, as it was insupportably cold; we found an excellent fire in our chamber, at which we enjoyed ourselves till dinner. Madame Brunet gave us some books to read, telling us she should think it a favour if we would conform to their custom of not working on their holidays. This is disagreeable, as they are numerous, and I cannot find that laziness promotes godliness. In the evening we played at cards. They frequently ask why it is not as great a crime to play at cards on a Monday as on a Sunday; to which I reply that the action itself is equally

bad or good on all days ; but we are taught that the Almighty said, 'Thou shalt keep holy the Sabbath day ;' from which we conclude that not only all manner of servile work is forbidden, but likewise all diversions and actions which render the mind incapable of prayer and meditation, for which we consider that day as more entirely set apart. They laugh at my reasoning, and tell me I should make an excellent preacher.

27th. Rose very unwell. Bingham is exceedingly kind and attentive ; and nothing can exceed the tender affection of my dear brother Jasper. I think I can never be ungrateful to my indulgent friends.

28th. Much better. Mrs. Brunet's son and one of her brothers arrived.

December 2nd. A most delightful morning. Mrs. Brunet obligingly took us in the coach to a small village called Marquise, the curate of which is related to her. I was greatly prepossessed in his favour, by observing the extraordinary attention which he paid to his father, who is very old and infirm.

3rd. Company to dinner : never was I so tired ! I hope it is not customary to give many dinnerings ; if it is, I must provide myself with a large stock of patience. I really seem to pick like a sparrow among eating creatures ; four hours at table ; eating all the time. The dinner I thought extravagantly profuse ; served in three courses of nine or ten dishes each ; and afterwards an elegant dessert ; then coffee, and to conclude, a glass of liqueur. There were



four priests present, and all the company ate and drank as if they thought that was the chief end for which they were born.

Sunday, the 6th. The morning alone in my chamber. Experienced a calm satisfaction which I would not exchange for all the world can give. We rode to Marquise, and drank tea with Monsieur le Curè; he invited us to dine on Sunday: I dread dinners! On Friday, my brother Jasper went to see my brother Charles, at Douay; when he returns, he purposes taking his leave of us. Madame Brunet is very desirous that one of her sons should accompany him to England. I know not what to think of this proposal, as I cannot believe it would be convenient to have him in our numerous family.

14th. Monsieur Dupont informs us that there is a great talk of war: in short, I think we hear of little else than wars and rumours of wars. I know not when they will follow the advice of the Apostles, and beat their swords into ploughshares, &c.

15th. Very busy all the morning, as we purpose going to Boulogne, and of course, have put all our finery in order. Arrived about six, and found Monsieur Louis Brunet ready to receive us.

16th. The whole morning spent in giving orders to the mantua-maker, &c. At six we went to Madame Corancan's, where we staid till eight; these visits are, I find, the daily custom. The time is spent at cards. There was a large assemblage; among them Madame Joubert,

accompanied by her two sons, the delicate little figures with whom we were so much amused on our first landing.

17th. Called at the Convent. Dined with Madame Routier, a relation of Madame Brunet. After dinner Madame Dupont, a sister of Madame Brunet came, accompanied by her daughter, a young girl apparently of my own age, of a pleasing figure, and most engaging countenance, with an air of freedom which I have not before seen in any of the French ladies. I feel an uncommon desire to be better acquainted with her, and have been informed that she goes very little into company, being a great lover of domestic employments, &c. My brother purposes setting out for London to-morrow, Mr. L. Brunet with him.

19th. Took a tender and affectionate leave of my dear brother. Spent the evening at Monsieur Dupont's. Mademoiselle appeared more pleasing than before, and I am impatient to understand French, that I may partake the pleasure of her conversation. Her manner of dressing pleases me much, there is something so simple in it; no dressing and frizzling of the hair; but it hangs in careless ringlets, as nature designed.

Sunday, 20th. Went to my beloved Herdinghen. Was agreeably surprised to find Mademoiselle Dupont of our party.

Sunday, 27th. When the card table appeared, retired to my chamber.

January 5th, 1777. Sunday. A deep snow.

My health has been so poor for some time past, that I am reduced to a very weak state; but I think, if the happiness of my friends were not as dear to me as my own, I should be far from regretting my present indisposition, as it inclines my mind to a serious consideration of those things that are necessary to salvation; a consideration which I might have neglected, had I been in perfect health.

6th. What they call a jovial day! that is noisy mirth, in which I found neither wit nor amusement, and therefore slipped out of the room. During the month before Lent, they have no meagre days.

Sunday, 12th. Boulogne. Arrived after a most dismal ride. The whole evening occupied in preparing our finery for making visits to-morrow.

13th. All the morning receiving visits of congratulation on our arrival. I must confess all this parade fills my mind with no very pleasing idea of the way in which we are to spend our time. At four o'clock began our toilet; after which, made no less than fifteen visits in two hours. Was much fatigued.

14th. The Frenchmaster came; he is to attend us daily. Went to the play and was heartily tired. -

15th. Began the day, as usual, with our studies. After dinner, spent two hours at our toilet, and four hours in visiting; a pretty account this, to give of the manner of spending our time. I am actually discontented with

myself; as so many hours employed to no purpose give me no satisfaction. We paid seven visits, and spent the evening with Madame de la Chorce, where there was a large company. Madame Brunet begs we will observe that all the names, preceded by du or de la, are families of distinction; but I have not patience to write them all down.

16th. I spent the evening, after our usual ramble, with Madame Corancon; there is something very pleasing in this lady; she has the remains of fine features, but grief has preyed upon the lilies and roses of her complexion. I find she has had many domestic misfortunes; losing her husband when very young, and lately her only daughter, in whom all her hopes and joys in this life were centred.

17th. Paid seventeen visits. I was so fatigued, and so dissatisfied, that I did not inquire the name or quality of a single person.

18th. Am really ill; prevailed on Madame Brunet and Bingham to make visits without me; employed my time, in my own room, much more to my satisfaction. My brother Charles arrived from Douay.

22nd. Went to a ball; I danced once, for which I have suffered much pain, and am fearful that I shall be ill, as I fainted on our return.

22rd. Very ill and very hoarse.

24th. Still speak with difficulty; left alone, Madame and Bingham having gone to a concert.

Sunday, February 2nd. Went to vespers for the first time, the nuns sing delightfully;

they are unseen, behind a curtain. I was so much affected that it was with difficulty I restrained my tears; some perverse drops did fall. I was very near the door, and could not see all the ceremonies, but I saw enough to excite surprize. 'My God,' thought I, 'that such a number of persons, seemingly disposed to serve Thee, should imagine that Thou art pleased with the burning of incense, and the lifting up of hands!' The sacrifice of a humble spirit is far more acceptable to our God, who designs that we should worship Him in spirit. But, in answer to all the objections you make to their numerous forms and ceremonies, they tell you that they were instituted by Moses, and commanded by God.

3rd. Madame Brunet received a letter from my father, with an account that her son, who went over with my brother, refused to go into any school. &c. I am really vexed about him, as I am sure it must give my friends much trouble and uneasiness.

4th. Had the happiness of seeing Mademoiselle Carmet, our opposite neighbour, return from church, after having gone through the ceremony of marriage. The bridegroom looked exceedingly gay. In the evening went to the play; was much disgusted with the piece, and amazed that Madame Brunet, who is a woman of sense and delicacy, should be so amused with the productions of their stage; but I really think the French have not the same idea of delicacy that the English have; for if you complain of their

improprieties they reply, 'O! you should appear not to understand them.' But this way of pleading for what is offensive to female decorum, is, I fear, a bad indication; for I do not think it possible to deceive the understanding, though the language employed may be the most elegant; therefore, I think all company where this kind of conversation abounds ought to be avoided with the greatest circumspection, by those who wish to be truly pure, in thought as well as in appearance. We sat in a box with Lady Newark; she talked much with me, and an English gentleman, who was with her, was kind enough to explain to me the passages in the play, which were worthy of observation.

7th. Spent the evening at our opposite neighbour's, the mother of the bride. Received a very serious letter; I must own, I think rather too serious; that is, there is in it a kind of melancholy that I cannot make agree with my ideas of religion; which, in my opinion, one should be careful to exhibit as both simple and pleasing.

8th. Frost and snow; intolerably cold. Received an invitation from the girls in the convent, to see two nuns take the veil to-morrow. Called, with Madame Brunet, at the convent of the Annonciades, the Abbess being a near relation of hers. She took the veil when young and handsome, and forsook friends, fortune, &c. Such a sacrifice must merit a reward; but I think it still more meritorious to support our trials, in the bustle of life, with patience and perseverance.

9th. Sunday. Went to the convent, at the

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hour fixed; their grand mass was not over; but in about half an hour, the curtain was taken from the grating, and we saw the nuns arranged on each side of the room; every one had a lighted wax taper in her hand. The intended nuns gave a paper to the priest, in which I was informed were the four vows of chastity, poverty, obedience, and a cloister. They then received the sacrament, and went through many mysterious and incomprehensible ceremonies; the concluding one was, that they were extended on the floor as if dead: they were then covered with a black cloth, and two or three pretty little girls, dressed in white, strewed flowers over them. When they rose, they were clothed in the dress of nuns, saluted by the sisterhood, and received as pure and unspotted from the world.

10th. Company to dinner! I do detest these dinnerings; one loses more time than it is possible for any reasonable person to imagine. It is really a melancholy consideration that so many beings, with faculties sufficient to render them useful and happy, should content themselves with eating, drinking, and playing. I hope these feastings will soon cease, as I should suppose they pass Lent in a more serious and moderate manner. I shall rejoice heartily when we return to the peaceful Herdinghen; for the more I see of the world, the more I am enchanted with solitude, and its lovely train of innocent amusements, that prompt the mind to gratitude and contemplation. Charles received a letter from Jasper containing excellent advice.

Shrove Tuesday. Am very undetermined about attending Madame Brunet and a large party to the play and a masked ball. Had I only my inclination to consult, I should not hesitate a moment in refusing; but my refusal is considered as a stubborn resolution to be singular: this is a character that I am by no means desirous of, and many ideas rush into my mind, to vindicate a compliance with the wishes of others; but on the other hand, I am, from experience, convinced that these noisy diversions intoxicate the mind, enfeeble it, and render it incapable of performing the duties for which we were born. I presume not to judge for others; but for myself, I find it necessary to guard against the tumultuous joys of the world. Nine o'clock. Not at the ball, which is satisfactory, though the cause gives me pain, as it is the illness of Madame Brunet.

Ash Wednesday. Madame has had a bad night, and is still ill. I think I never heard such a noise as there was in the streets last night; carriages rolling, music and singing, screaming and laughing, &c. I am quite charmed that we have not to accuse ourselves of adding to the number of these thoughtless gangs. My brother Charles, who went for a few hours, assured us that we might think ourselves very happy in being quiet at home; for it was impossible that we could have an idea of the bustle, noise, and confusion which he had witnessed, or of the ribaldry and indecorum which were the result of such a mixture of characters being masked.



The lord and the chimney-sweep were upon equal footing.

We sat all day in Madame Brunet's chamber, and did more work than we have ever done since we came to Boulogne.

13th. Madame is again very ill ; poor Monsieur Brunet arrived yesterday and has scarcely left her room. I never saw a man more tender and attentive. She was better in the evening.

14th. Madame Brunet quite free from pain. We have spent some days in peace and tranquillity ; no cards, no company.

16th. Sunday. Received a pleasing epistle from Mrs. Knowles, containing a few serious directions on the most important object of our lives. My heart melts with the earnestness of my desires to become one of those few that labour after the perfection of holiness.

19th. We began to learn embroidery. Deep snow and very cold.

20th. We are quite pleased with the progress we have made in learning the language, &c., since Madame has kept her room. I am not sorry that Lent has begun, as there are no balls, &c. They are not very strict in this family, as they eat meat once or twice a week ; in short, I think it but a farce their pretending to fast ; for though they do not eat flesh, they feast upon delicate fish, swimming in butter, &c. This, in reality, I prefer to their days of gras ; and although they scruple to eat a morsel of meat, they do not scruple to give way to their anger.

26th. Walked round the ramparts ; the castle is an ancient pile of building, now made use of as a prison. Two or three rooms, which look upon the ramparts, are particularly reserved for the confinement of young gentlemen who are extravagant, or any way disobedient to their parents. Every father or mother has power to shut up their children for any time they may think proper ; for life, if it is thought their crimes deserve it. One of the young officers that we saw on landing, is now in confinement here. His father is an officer who has lost a considerable fortune by gaming ; the son, having a tincture of the same propensity, was informed by his mother that the first time she heard of his playing in a certain coffee-house, she would confine him in the chateau ; notwithstanding this, the young man followed his inclination, and his mother put her threat in force. I think two months is the time fixed for his punishment.

March 1st. Received an invitation from an English family, named Price, to a ball and concert. Bingham, &c. went, but I was not well enough. Employed the time in reading Thomas à Kempis, and felt more satisfaction than I should have done in their splendid assembly.

Sunday, March 2nd. Went to vespers ; the nuns sang melodiously, and my heart was lifted up in secret to the Lord. Bingham went out in the evening, but as I have told Madame Brunet that I prefer staying at home on the Sunday, she now seldom proposes anything else to me.

3rd. A crowd of company. Nicholls and Powell dined with us. The poor girls are much altered. Nicholls has lost her fine colour, and has grown very awkward. I think if I had twenty girls, I would not send them to a convent for education. I cannot find that they learn anything but to repeat a number of prayers by rote; they speak scarcely a word of French, neither is there much probability of their learning it, as most of the pensioners are English; and of course, they chatter together in their native language.

5th. At our usual occupations. I worked a rose so prettily that I was quite charmed with it! Spent the evening with Madame la Baronne, whom I admire; she is a woman of learning and of refined wit; and is elegantly polite to every one. Madame Brunet's sister was there, but they did not even look at each other.

6th. At the play; their pieces are by no means to my taste; I think myself fortunate in having health which frequently renders me incapable of complying with the gaieties of this place.

9th. Sunday. At vespers, which I prefer to mass, as there are fewer ceremonies, and the singing is not so loud. Passed the evening alone.

10th. A great deal of company; among them Madame la Baronne, with her amiable son, a youth about twenty-four, who nets and embroiders as delicately as any lady; visits with mamma, &c. I cannot help observing how very

anxious Madame Brunet is to make us notice that all the grand folks of the town visit her. I must confess it is an ambition that I should not wish to share.

11th. Was exceedingly shocked to hear of the death of Madame Méricœur, the young lady whose wedding we saw, not many weeks since; she was taken ill on Thursday, and died this morning, leaving a distressed husband and mother. Who, that has any consideration, would be so anxious after the happiness which is so uncertain! These daily instances of the instability of earthly joys should certainly warn us against a reliance upon them. What a melancholy change in this family! the other day, all gay, and flattering themselves with the prospect of many succeeding years. Happy is the mind whose dependance is not upon the fluctuating joys of this world! who can contemplate all with the eye of a passenger that is seeking rest in another!

26th. Called on Monsieur Dupont, who is very ill; my heart bleeds for the distress of his family. Poor Mademoiselle looks terribly; she attends her father day and night. Went with Madame Brunet to witness a ceremony that takes place during Lent, and that they call Ténèbres. I was quite alarmed at this strange performance. Just before the service finished, the candles which burn before the altar were put out, and the priests, with all the congregation began to rap with their books and their feet, which made an inconceivable noise. I asked Madame for an

explanation of this extraordinary scene, and she informed me that it was to remind them of the darkness and confusion which took place at the death of our Saviour!

27th. Arrived at Herdinghen. All appears so nice, so clean, and so quiet, that I am quite delighted.

28th. Retired from table before Monsieur Brunet had finished his dessert; I know this was a breach of good manners; but really I have not patience to sit three or four hours at table, which Monsieur Brunet does.

Easter Sunday. Sincerely wished myself with my friends in England, as I felt a strong desire to be in the assemblies of the faithful.

31st. None of the family do any kind of work but what is absolutely necessary; after dinner, being fatigued with idleness, I went up stairs, and there employed myself as I thought proper.

April 1st. The Brunets are in great affliction, having received the account of Monsieur Dupont's death. Poor Madame and Mademoiselle Dupont, my heart throbs with pity for their distress; I wish it was in my power to relieve it. Young Brunet arrived from St. Omers, with one of the directors of L'Ecole Chrétien. Brunet appears good humoured, and a lad of genius.

3rd. The Brother, or Frère, from St. Omers, is a very obliging good kind of a being. Brunet is sensible, and I believe learned; but he talks of nothing but the pleasures of the chase, his dogs, &c.

4th. Read to one of the frères, with silver locks. They leave us to-morrow; I am really sorry, as they are the only visitors we have had, whose conversation I have found pleasing and instructive.

Sunday, 6th. Went with Madame, in the cabriolet, to vespers. It was a delightful day, and the road to their church is very pleasant; it was the first time that I had been there.

7th. A great feast-day. At vespers, could not be so attentive to myself as I wished, for there were a number of ceremonies which I could not help observing. It is strange to me that so many absurdities should be considered an acceptable sacrifice to the Lord. I think the priest does little but change his clothes; but I must say that the whole congregation seem to attend with seriousness; much more so than the protestants; and I doubt not the sincere in heart reap the benefit arising from true devotion. After vespers, there was a grand ceremony of choosing a queen, who takes care of the church, and is considered as the head of the village; there was a train of young girls, all dressed in their best, with blue ribbons across their shoulders; her majesty was distinguished by the superiority of her dress. The custom is designed as an encouragement to keep the church clean, &c. It is reckoned an honour to be chosen, as the queen is always looked upon as the superior of the company. She holds a lighted candle, while the priest preaches a long sermon of advice; telling her that she ought to be the light of her com-

panions, by setting them an example of virtue, prudence, industry, &c.

April 10th. A most delightful day! We walked in the wood, and fixed upon a romantic spot, to build a grotto in. Heard of the death of Mr. Charment, a near neighbour, who dined with us soon after our arrival. I think it is remarkable that, out of the families with whom we have dined since we came to this part, three of the principals are dead.

15th. St. Omers. A fine day and pleasant journey.

16th. St. Omers is delightfully situated, and the streets long and spacious. Went to the college where my brother Charles and Brunet are. Le Frère Auventin, who had spent some time with us at Herdinghen, was very polite; he attended us to the noble structure of St. Bertin's Abbey. There are a number of very fine paintings, which I examined while Madame Brunet and the Frère repeated their prayers; this they are obliged to do when they enter the church, as they consider it a spot sacred to the Lord; but in my opinion, all places are alike to our God, who dwells not in temples made with hands, but takes up his abode in the hearts of the meek and humble. Round the chapel are hung the arms of the monks, as they are all descended from grand and ancient families; they have large fortunes, which they give up, and have all things in common, forsaking the allurements of the world. They at least pretend to lead a life of mortification; fasting and praying

continually ; but how far they may be inwardly detached from the follies of life is best known to themselves.

Christ and his disciples never excluded themselves from the eye of the world ; and I should imagine it is not the design of our Creator that each individual should live to himself. After having expressed our thanks to the polite monks, we made low curtsies and departed. I felt a little chagrin at quitting the very civil monks ; as they were the only conversable men that I have yet met with, in this part of the world. I think there is a little danger in the ladies having such free access ; as numbers of this society are men of wit, learning and politeness, both young and handsome.

18th. Made several visits, and then set out to the play ; very reluctantly on my part, for I was quite tired, and should have preferred peace and quietness to all the plays in the world ; but this would not be hearkened to, so I was compelled to punish myself.

19th. Reached Herdinghen.

23rd. Bingham received a large piece of beef for roasting. English beef is a dainty here, and Monsieur Brunet intends inviting some of his friends to partake of it.

24th. My friend and I were very busy in making a plum-pudding, but unfortunately we forgot the eggs ; of course, our cookery gained us but little credit.

26th. St. Mark. A grand feast ! I think these people do little else than feast ; we went



with Madame to mass ; a long and tedious ceremony. I believe they consider the bishop as a being of a superior order ; he walks to the church, surrounded by almost all the village, who join in singing psalms, &c. A canopy of crimson, fringed with gold, is supported by four old men ; and under this, the great man sits or walks, in state. They say he is a man exemplary for his piety, charity, &c. I hope that all proceeds from the right spring. Education may so far have influenced his mind that the forms and ceremonies may to him appear necessary ; but I must acknowledge that I beheld them with an emotion which I cannot describe. The bishop wears a large ring upon his little finger, which the priest kneels to kiss ; the servants kneel when they present water to wash his hands. I was so much affected by these strange, and as I thought, presumptuous, ceremonies, that I could not restrain my tears ; and how earnestly did I wish that all the world were acquainted with that gentle tranquillity which results from a humble waiting upon the Lord !

Sunday, 28th. Arrived at Boulogne. The country is quite enchanting, and it vexes me to leave it for this odious place, where we do little but visit and play at cards.

29th. Had the mortification to be set to cards. I could not but make the secret comparison between these thoughtless people, who meet for no better purpose than to idle away their time, and those friends whom I have left in England. I daily wish to be again among

them ; it would then be my own fault if an hour passed unimproved.

Sunday, May 4th. Passed the morning alone. I pity those who are unacquainted with the sweet consolations resulting from serious meditation ; and with that peace which the world cannot give nor take away.

7th. After an elegant dinner at Madame Dupont's, we walked in a garden belonging to the monks ; it is a rural pretty spot, by the sea. I found it had been a famous place for receiving and harbouring contraband goods, in which the rev. fathers had the chief profit ; but this has, of late, been prevented by a wall being built, &c. Had a delightful ride to Herdinghen.

16th. Had the inexpressible pleasure of receiving letters from my kind friends in England ; an epistle from my dear Jasper betrayed his affectionate partiality.

19th. Dined at Agin ; the day was spent agreeably. Was pleased with the moderation of the dinner, which was only frugally hospitable ; it really gave me a very favourable opinion of the mistress and family.

23rd. Rained all the day ; very unwelcome weather to Madame Brunet's servants, as there is a large wash on hand ; twelve women are employed, besides household servants. It is the custom here to wash only four times in the year ; and it is, of course, a great undertaking, as they use a vast deal of table-linen, &c.

28th. Boulogne. Arrived in the afternoon. Dressed and sallied forth to spend the evening

at an English lady's; when we arrived all the party were at cards, to which we also sat down. While we played, a circumstance occurred which made me feel in a way that I cannot describe. The sacrament which is carried to the sick, and is always announced by the ringing of a hand-bell, passed by the windows. The company, being mostly French, threw down their cards, knelt and prayed for a few minutes, and then set to cards again. I mean not to censure them; they may act up to their judgment and feelings, but I must confess it would appear to me very presumptuous to address the great Almighty in a form of words, at a time when the mind was interested in affairs so trifling, so inconsistent with that awful sense with which we ought to present ourselves, when disposed to offer prayer.

On our return I found a very affectionate epistle from my honoured mother; all friends well, and kindly anxious for my health. Dr. Ash, as well as Dr. Knowles, advises my bathing in the sea, which I shall certainly do, but am quite undetermined where to go for that purpose.

31st. Have had a very restless night, and am much indisposed; very unfit to go into company; but I must dress and put on my best looks. We are going to Herdinghen in the evening.

June 1st, Sunday. The greater part of the day in my chamber, there being company; and I have neither spirits nor inclination to join them. I have the mortification to find that we are no quieter here than at Boulogne.

5th. A pleasant walk, but I could not enjoy it. Objects appear gay or gloomy, according to the state of the mind.

7th. After dinner, the conversation turned on religion; they were very severe upon me, and rallied me unmercifully, giving me the appellation of Quaker or Trembler. Nothing could be more unjust than their censures of this people, whom they conclude to be unworthy of the name of Christian. I heard all with silent patience. After having listened for some time, I declared myself quite in favour of the real principles of Quakerism; and retired, leaving them to make what comments they pleased.

9th. Our grotto is actually begun; Monsieur Dupont is indefatigable in his endeavours to oblige.

12th. The whole day at the grotto; we have lined it with moss, which we employed the poor girls of the village to gather for us.

14th. Received a lively and obliging epistle from Mrs. Capper, of Redland; she speaks seriously of making a visit to this part of the world, before the summer is over.

19th. Exceedingly busy all the day, assisting Monsieur Dupont to paper the breakfast parlour.

22nd, Sunday. To-morrow we propose going to Calais.

28rd. Calais. Walked through the principal streets, which are not very numerous, nor elegant.

25th. Near three hours at the glass; at last, satisfied with our outward appearance, we set

out to take a view of the citadel, which with its contents are, I think, all that is worthy of notice at Calais. In the afternoon, we left it and came to Herdinghen.

30th. Wet, windy, and cold; much more like November than June.

July 2nd. Uncommonly cold. Spent some time in my chamber.

4th. Bingham had a letter from her father, who says that all our friends are well, and that my brothers Jasper and James are now at Birmingham. My heart beats with affectionate desire to be among them.

8th. Dined at Marquise; never spent a more disagreeable day; the gentlemen drank a great deal, and in consequence were very noisy and troublesome. I was truly glad when the coach was ordered, but we were no sooner seated in it than we perceived that our coachman had made as free with the bottle as his master and we were obliged to get out and march back, about half a mile to Marquise, where we again arrived at the curé's. To our great satisfaction we found the company dispersed; beds were ordered, and we soon retired; but my spirits were so agitated by the scenes I had witnessed, that I fainted several times. I wished myself in some secluded spot, where I might never more be in company with those who so shamefully abuse the reason they are blessed with. I am certain that, if others enjoyed these extravagancies no more than I do, they would soon be excluded, as destroyers of our peace. Those recreations which will not

bear reflection are ill suited to rational, intelligent creatures. A train of such ideas kept me awake most of the night. Arrived at Herdinghen, Wednesday morning, the 9th.

14th. Am quite astonished to find myself, this evening, in my own room. This morning we went to Wissant, where I expected to find every accommodation for bathing, and where I anticipated a time of happy tranquillity, 'free from bustle, care, and strife; 'however, all my pleasing ideas vanished the very moment we were introduced to Madame, who received us with a disrespectful, vulgar air, in a miserable, dirty house. She showed us two filthy rooms, for one of which she made an exorbitant demand. I therefore informed her that things were not to my mind, and left her. I know not what to do; however I am thankful that I am safe from Wissant. Boulogne is my resource; Madame Dupont's, if she do not object.

16th. Boulogne. Madame Dupont received me with friendly civility. I have no doubt that I shall find my situation agreeable; all the inconvenience which I apprehend is being obliged to see a great deal of company. Mademoiselle Dupont is absent, but expected soon. I think I shall find much pleasure in her society, as I can now converse with more facility.

Sunday, 20th. Madame Routier sent an invitation for us to sup with her upon a roast leg of mutton. In England, we should think it rather an extraordinary dish, but here such suppers are not uncommon; their dinners, in general, con-

sist of lighter food than their suppers. We obeyed the summons, and were agreeably surprised by the entrance of Mademoiselle Dupont, who was very kind.

22nd. After dinner, sat with Félicité Dupont in her room, where she spends the greatest part of her time, reading, writing, and drawing, in which latter art she excels. We had much serious conversation. I really feel myself strongly attached to her, as she seems to be free from that affectation and levity which are generally so apparent in the French ladies. I think she has naturally a strong understanding, which has been improved by extensive reading.\*

24th. Read French and English together; we reap pleasure and advantage from these reciprocal endeavours to instruct each other.

August 3rd, Sunday. Spent a few quiet hours in my own room. Walked into the country, where we partook of a frugal repast, at a farmhouse; sitting upon hay, with a plank for our table. The clouds were remarkably beautiful, and I was disposed to enjoy the calm contemplation which the surrounding objects seemed to invite.

4th. In the evening Félicité and I took our book to the garden, and seated ourselves under a clump of trees; we stayed nearly two hours, and enjoyed a pleasing calm; all nature glowing

\* This amiable young person was afterwards married to Brissot de Warville, who died under the guillotine during the Revolution in 1793. See sketch of his life in Aikin's Biographical Dictionary.

around us. I could not but regret the folly which leads men to search for happiness in crowds, and in pompous parade, when real satisfaction may be purchased at so cheap a rate. As a flower unfolds in the genial warmth of the sun, the mind expands in serious meditation and reflection.

9th. Dined at Madame Routier's with three Anglois. I was not satisfied with our amusements; they were of a nature too gay and noisy to contribute to the real delight of the mind, which desires something more than momentary enjoyment.

22nd. Félicité and I took a ride to the Bois de Boulogne, about four miles off; it is a delightful spot. We sat under the trees, and enjoyed the tranquillity of the scene. The disposition of my friend seems formed to enter into my tastes.

28th. Received letters from my kind parents; they are anxious and unhappy at my indisposition. Had a line from Bingham, informing me that she purposes going to Calais, to meet Mrs. P. Capper, who is going to fetch her children from a convent at Douay.

29th. The palpitation at my heart returned with great violence. The physician assures me that it is only the effect of the weak state to which I am reduced. I pass the nights almost without sleep, and have very little appetite, therefore I cannot, at present, expect to regain my strength. I hope I am not impatient under these bodily afflictions; they are light, in com-



parison with a wounded spirit. I have that trust and confidence in my God which makes his will my delight. Though He afflict me, yet will I trust in Him; and while his grace supports me, I can, as it were, forget the present pain, and look joyfully forward to that glory which shall be revealed to those who persevere.

September 1st. A comfortable day, without pain or sickness. Walked out and enjoyed the air, though winter begins to creep upon us, and, as Thompson finely expresses it, 'lets loose his northern blasts.' Received a very cold and formal letter from Mrs. Capper, informing me that she has arrived at Herdinghen with Mr. Bingham, and wishes to know if I purpose returning with her to England.\* The abrupt proposal surprises me, and as I have received no such intimation from my friends, I shall decline giving a direct answer at present. My affectionate friend Félicité expresses great concern at the thought of our separation, and I think my own feelings are not less painful.

2nd. Much indisposed, but as it proved a delightful afternoon, my friend and I went, in the cabriolet, to the Bois de Boulogne, and reposed under the spreading branches of a fine old tree. As we generally take our books on these excursions, reading and conversation have

\* The behaviour of her relative probably arose from reports of her being inclined to become a Friend; but this is not explicitly stated. It seems also probable that the coldness and even unkindness of her conduct towards Mary Capper operated to her disadvantage in the minds of those about her; which she keenly felt.—Note by Ed.

their turn, and we enjoy many pleasing moments, untasted by those who are engaged in a continual round of more expensive luxuries. How greatly are we mistaken when we consider riches as the only happiness! The truly pious mind exults in well-grounded hope, and steadfastly fixes the eye of faith beyond the present scene.

4th. Again visited the wood, and returned about sunset, which afforded us many delightful views. They brought to my mind those beautiful lines beginning, 'These are thy glorious works, Parent of good!' It is impossible to contemplate the wonders of nature without feeling the heart glow with gratitude to the great Author, whose goodness is but dimly seen in these his works.

Saturday, 13th. A day of adventures! While engaged in a serious conversation with my friend, I was called down stairs to Bingham and her father, the unexpected sight of whom gave me great pleasure. After I had made some enquiries about my relations, they told me that they expected Mrs. Capper in a few minutes with Madame Brunet. I then begged leave to go and make some little addition to my dress, as I knew that these ladies paid much regard to the appearance. When Mrs. Capper arrived, I saluted her with pleasure, but she treated me haughtily; and seating herself, began, without an explanation, to reproach me cruelly. I was confounded, and could not guess her meaning, till she was pleased to say that I was an ungrateful, undutiful child. I soon perceived that she

had been misinformed, or that she had very unjust notions of my real disposition ; however, I calmly sat by and heard all ; for, knowing my own integrity, her accusations made no deep impression. She, at length, became more moderate, but I did not attempt self-defence, as her opinion is too variable to be of any value. Such dispositions are too trifling to be considered sufficient to disturb the minds of those who act from the unvarying rules of virtue. It is a deplorable thing thus to let the passions overcome the reason, and such persons are objects of pity. Happy the mind that is purified by humility, gentleness, and a meek dependence on a powerful and glorious Redeemer.

When Madame was quite spent, she begged me to send for a hair-dresser ; I was glad of the release, and almost flew to oblige her. I then went to pay my compliments to Madame Brunet, as I recollected having neglected her, when I met Mrs. Capper. She did not receive me with her usual cordiality, nor could all my apologies restore her wonted good humour. This mortified me exceedingly, and I could with difficulty suppress my painful agitation. Taking my leave, I retired to my room, and suffered my tears to flow.

Sunday, 14th. I intend going to Herdinghen to-morrow. I do not expect a very agreeable reception ; but as I think it due to those from whom I have received civilities, I shall not consult my inclination.

15th. Set out early, with Madame and Made-moiselle Dupont. We met Madame Brunet

and a party of gentlemen and ladies at Marquise. They were going to the chase, and we joined the cavalcade, and passed the day as agreeably as I had any reason to expect. We dined upon the grass, while the sportsmen were in pursuit of their game. Mrs. Capper seemed to have forgotten all that she had said to me, and was so officiously kind that she scarcely left me a moment's liberty. The whole party were quite astonished at the change, as she had declared that she would not speak to me, if I came. I am sorry she has made herself appear so ridiculous. I regret to perceive that Madame Brunet has been prejudiced against me. Herdinghen is a very different place from what it was when I first knew and admired it. It was then free from noise and parade; now the house is full of company. Nothing is talked of but parties of pleasure. To-morrow the chase again, and on Monday a party on the water, with music, &c. My friend Bingham looks fatigued and out of spirits, but Madame Brunet enters into all with cheerfulness. An English family named Toll, two gentlemen from Paris, &c., are here; all seems hurry and confusion.

16th. Spent the morning chiefly in my own room; the extreme gaiety does not suit me. I feel like a stranger indeed! I have no inclination to familiarize myself with this mode of life; it may do for others, but give me sobriety, with a mind disposed for reflection. A letter just received from my dear Jasper, informs me that he has some thoughts of coming here. I shall

greatly rejoice to see him. I cannot but observe how ill-informed we English females find ourselves, in comparison with the French ladies ; they appear perfectly acquainted with the rise and progress of all material events in the history, both of their own and other nations. This is certainly a part of education not merely ornamental, which might well be substituted for more trivial acquisitions.

17th. Mrs. Capper and Mr. Bingham left us. I walked to the grotto, and found it improved in beauty, as the moss has taken root, and flourishes in all its various colours. Boulogne; evening. I can scarcely believe that I am now writing in the chamber of my friend Félicité !—At dinner-time an arrival was announced ; I ran out of the room, and had the satisfaction of embracing the most affectionate of brothers ; I readily agreed to return here with him, as fresh company had arrived."

It will here be needful to break off from the journal for a time, in order to take a glance at the state of things in the family at home. It appears that the decided attachment of her brother Jasper to the principles and practice of the Society of Friends, had awakened many fears in the minds of his parents, who were much alarmed for the consequences of his influence among their numerous children ; especially as they could not but see that Mary was strongly attracted to unite with the views of Friends. A letter, written about this time by Rebecca Capper to

her son William, will depict her feelings, in this trying exigency, so as to excite the sympathy of every susceptible mind. It may be premised that William never made much, if any, change in his religious observances, and always remained a member of the Episcopal Church.

“Birmingham, September 18th, 1777.

MY DEAR WILLIAM.

A complaint in my eyes still remains; but I am induced to run the hazard of hurting my sight, to say a few words respecting a letter which your brother Samuel put into my hand last night. Your dear father (for he is indeed dear to me) has not seen your letter, nor, if I can help it, ever shall; for the blow which your brother Jasper has given him, has almost struck him to the ground, and I am apprehensive that he could not support another such. As to my own feelings, I forbear to mention them; for I know, and am fully persuaded that, grievous as they are, they ought not to be held in any estimation against that which teacheth, ‘He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me;’ and if it has been your lot, my child! (for so I will yet call you,) to be born of parents that were ignorant and ungodly; that neither by precept nor example taught you to serve God in spirit and in truth; but on the contrary, that it was enough to honour Him with the lips, though the heart was far from Him—but stop, and examine, O! my soul, dost thou not, in this, stand self-accused? I have indeed

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been guilty of great neglect of my duty, in that state in life in which it pleased God to place me ! in caring too much for the things of this world, and in neglecting myself, and also in not instructing my children, to seek after the kingdom of God and his righteousness : not remembering that all these things will be added unto us. But sinful and wretched as I am, well knowing that as his justice, so his mercy is great ; and that, upon sincere repentance and amendment, which, through his grace or Holy Spirit, that He hath promised to those who ask for it aright, and without which we cannot do the least good thing—I say, by this I hope, and will endeavour to live better, for the short, perhaps very short, time I have to remain here. Now in the midst of this grievous and very heavy affliction, that we, your parents, are at this time under, on account of the separation which is already made in the family, and more that are likely to be made ; I say, in this I can see a ray of comfort, and can draw this from it : that the Almighty Disposer of all things hath permitted, for wise and good ends, this his afflicting hand to be laid upon us ; that He chasteneth and correcteth those whom He loveth, and would draw unto Him ; that it hath already inclined my heart more unto Him, and hath caused me to look more strictly into my way and manner of life, and hath raised in me a hope that, by his divine and inspiring grace, I shall be enabled to bring forth good fruits ; to avoid those things which are contrary to my profession, and to follow all

such things as are agreeable to it. Now this I knew before to be my bounden duty; but we are such poor frail creatures, (at least I find myself such,) as to stand in need of frequent stirring up; and it may be one among the various and mysterious ways of Providence, that He permits so many different sects and opinions; as I make no doubt all believe, at least, that they are guided by the same divine grace or Holy Spirit, faith, and Holy Scriptures.

You say you are inclined to attend the meetings of Quakers by stronger motives than compliance to Jasper; that you find yourself enriched by the plain truths they deliver; that you are charmed with the love, sweetness, and tenderness of affection which appear among them. Oh! my child, you see not beyond the mask, nor why it is occasionally put on; but to gain three proselytes all at once is a great acquisition!—But stay! where am I running? or where is my Christian charity, if they think they are in the right way? A crowd of ideas press upon my mind, but I will only beg one favour of you; it will perhaps be the last I shall ever ask of you; it is this: that you will, for a few Sundays, go to the church of which you have been a member, (though perhaps an unworthy one) and set your mind in a right frame of devotion, remembering that you are at that time as well as at all others, immediately in the presence of that God who knoweth the secrets of all hearts; and though He regardeth not time nor place, yet reflect and consider for what



purpose you are come there; and as much as lieth in you, suppress all vain and wandering thoughts; keep your eyes from looking on the faces of others; and do not, from their look and manner, judge of what passes in their hearts, but be careful of your own; and with fervent zeal and humility, attend to those prayers, praises, and adorations, there offered to the throne of grace; and though they may be uttered by a man of like infirmities with yourself, yet let not that hinder you from sincerely seeking for the assistance of God's Spirit, to enable you to do that which is right in his sight; and as I am sure you will find what will suit your own feelings; in them join, with sincerity of heart; for though God knoweth our necessities before we ask, yet hath it pleased Him to command that we, his poor creatures, should lay our wants before Him; and if at all times and in all places, why not when we are gathered together?

I have reason to believe my dear Mary's health is but very indifferent at this time, and that her old complaints return with greater force than ever. I firmly believe that the agitation of mind she has laboured under of late, has greatly increased her bodily infirmity.

I think it likely that she and I may never be permitted to meet again in this world; but though by different roads, my sincere hope is, that we shall all meet again in the next. I had promised to myself some pleasure in coming up to London, to meet your sister there, and with joy to bring her home, but I fear that is over;

her home cannot be with us, her parents; for well I know, that would be the cause of strife and debate, which I think it is best to avoid; and if we must be separated, may that Being who first gave you all to me, enable me with patient resignation to part with you, in whatever way he shall think fit! but I find myself a poor frail creature, and do indeed, at this moment fear and tremble before Him.

I had much more on my mind to say to you, but I have lost it; so conclude, with sincere prayer for your present and eternal welfare.

Your truly affectionate mother,

REBECCA CAPPER."

From this letter and from some subsequent remarks in Mary Capper's journal, it appears that she entered pretty fully into her brother's change of religious view, and that this had been so far made known to her parents as to make them hesitate about allowing her to return home. She deeply felt her trying position, and she also sympathized tenderly with her brother, who was, at that time, much distressed in mind. He seems to have been sent, to convey her back to England, without loss of time. While they were detained before sailing, they were in the practice of frequently retiring together, for the purpose of silently waiting upon the Lord, that they might know his will, and experience a renewal of their spiritual strength; and they were often comforted together, on these occasions.

Resuming the journal, Mary Capper proceeds:

"September 18th. My kind friend expresses much satisfaction at my quick return. I really feel greatly at the thought of leaving her, it may be for ever! Her tenderness and amiable disposition have gained my admiration and my warm affection, and have greatly interested me in her future well-doing.

19th. Much in my friend's room, either reading or preparing for my departure.

20th. My brother and Félicité accompanied me to the Bois de Boulogne, and we passed an hour very pleasantly under the shade of the fine trees, not in the least regretting the parties at Herdinghen. Mere sensual delights are very unsatisfactory to a mind, capable of tasting the pleasure which results from contemplating the wonders and the goodness of Him who created and preserves this universal frame. All nature speaks forth His praise; and shall not His intelligent creatures admire and extol His infinite wisdom and excellence!

Sunday, 21st. My brother and I declined going to mass; we passed the time very agreeably; and I experienced true satisfaction in silence.

25th. My brother and I rode out in the cabriolet; he made me acquainted with some circumstances, relative to himself, that are very far from giving me pleasure; however I must not suffer myself to be cast down, but be firm in hope, trust, and confidence.

Sunday, 28th. Did not go to mass, but sat with my brother. Received a letter that distresses me exceedingly. Went to vespers.

October 1st. After a restless night, was very sick and low all day. My brother and I intend going to Herdinghen soon, to take leave of Madame Brunet, &c. I feel much at the thought, and cannot but reflect on many pleasing scenes which I have enjoyed, and on the many marks of more than civility which I have received from Madame Brunet; also on the affectionate esteem that I bear to my dear friend; the idea of quitting all these, with little probability of ever meeting again, really gives me such uneasiness as I never before experienced. My brother still seems unhappy.

2nd. Could not sleep, and rose early. Distressed at receiving no letters from England.

4th. A polite note from Madame Brunet informs me, that she will be happy to see us next week; therefore I am a little in a hurry, as we females cannot move without an encumbrance of caps, ribands, &c., &c.

5th, Sunday. Ill in the night, and very poorly to-day, which I have passed quietly.

7th. A very civil reception at Herdinghen.

11th. Strolled about with my brother. In the evening was agreeably surprised by the arrival of Madame Dupont and my dear friend.

12th, Sunday. My brother and I sat together.

13th. Madame Dupont and Félicité left us. We have not determined when to go, but I hope soon, as the family are in a confusion of gaiety,

which seems not to allow a moment for serious reflection. My brother and I are considered stupid mortals, for we cannot join in the vacant laugh, noisy song, &c.

14th. Walked, embroidered, and read; experienced sweet satisfaction in my own mind. My brother Charles arrived from St. Omer; he has grown robust.

16th. Took leave of Monsieur and Madame Brunet. The rising tears prevented my expressing the acknowledgments which I thought due to them. I made several attempts to speak, but my tongue seemed to refuse obedience, and I hastened to the coach, to hide my emotion. We arrived at Boulogne about noon, and I believe were welcome guests at Madame Dupont's.

18th. It is with difficulty that I keep up an appearance of cheerfulness, for my spirits are uncommonly affected. The thought of leaving my friends here, and of seeing those in England, causes an agitation which I can scarcely endure.

22nd. On board the same vessel which brought us to this place! I have left the arms of a tender, affectionate friend, and the tears still steal down my cheeks.

25th, Saturday. Arrived safely in London last night, after a tedious voyage. We were both very ill. This morning we landed from a small boat, and drove to my uncle Smallwood's. I had scarcely sufficient strength left to embrace the tenderest of mothers!

## CHAPTER III.

RETURN HOME IN 1777, AND MEMORANDA DURING HER STAY THERE.—REMOVAL TO WILMINGTON, AND JOURNAL WHILE THERE IN 1781 AND 1782.

THE return of Mary Capper to the paternal dwelling was the occasion of much trial and difficulty both to herself and to her affectionate parents. She thus writes, respecting this interesting period of her life. "It was after my return from France that an obvious change took place in my manners, etc., so as to attract observation. The ceremonies of the church, when I attended with my parents and the family, affected me in a very unusual manner; I do not know that I can say painfully, but with a desire to act more conformably with what was preached. Sometimes I wept, and sometimes had to be taken out, nearly fainting; but could not describe my sensations. I had then no intention of making any change in my religious profession; but my dear mother's disappointment was keen, when, in process of time, I felt that I could not conform to what I had been taught was necessary to salvation; and kept much retired, without attending any place of worship."

About the end of the year 1777, her brother Jasper joined the Society of Friends, and in 1778, he married Anne Fry, the daughter of John Fry, of Whitechapel. In regard to these

important changes, his mother remarked, that if the thing were of the Lord, it would stand ; if of man, it would come to nought.

Mary Capper appears to have made very few memoranda during her stay at home ; but the few which have been preserved, and which are here presented, give proof of the continued seriousness of her mind, and of her desire, under a complication of difficulties and disadvantages, to follow on to know the Lord for herself.

“ September 8th, 1779.

If men are born merely to live, or rather breathe, a few short years, and then fall to nothing ; if virtue is only a name, or a habit acquired by certain modes of education, why have we a secret, unconquerable knowledge of right and wrong ? If it be possible to believe that annihilation takes place, after this span of pain and sorrow, we are of all creatures the most deplorable. Brutes have capacities to desire and enjoy, but man has a reasonable soul, which is not to be satisfied with sensual gratifications. How vain ! how weak is the human heart ! Can a reflecting mind be ignorant of its own instability ! Can the maxims of the most learned sophistry fortify us against the alluring poison of those temptations which surround us ! Can speculation, or gratified passions, produce those calm, happy effects which result from a firm dependence on a superior power, who will reward our humble faith, or assuredly punish our arrogant pride ! How

amiable is the humble mind, which trusts not in its own strength, which is not above acknowledging its own weakness, and glories only in its hope and confidence in the living God."

" March 12th, 1780.

'The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my hightower!' O! who is like unto our God.

What am I, O! Lord, what am I, that thou shouldst so wonderfully extend thy love towards me! Of myself I am worse than nothing; all weakness and contradiction! One moment, fervent in desire; the next, cold and languid in the performance of the least of thy commands. O! woe is me; who shall deliver me from this body of treachery! The Lord Himself! The mighty Lord who is my strength, and my help in the time of need. He will graciously dart a ray of divine light into my soul; then shall I plainly perceive that He is the ancient of days, that was and is, and is to come; the sure rock of defence to all that trust in Him.

How comfortable are the dawns of divine grace! How encouraging are thy promises, my God! Let me rest in thy truth! Give me sure confidence in thy mercy! Suffer me not to dwell in darkness! O! turn not thy wrath upon her who is insufficient to bear thy displeasure! Let me not put any confidence in my own strength; for, Lord! Thou knowest my impotence! the secret thoughts of my heart are



not hidden from thee! How shall I stand if Thou leave me to my own guidance! but Thou art wonderful in goodness, and I will trust in thy mercy. I have tasted of thy loving-kindness, and my soul aspires to the fruition of joy, at thy right hand for ever. Amen!"

Soon after making these memoranda, and while in a state of much conflict of mind, Mary Capper was consigned by her parents, to the care of her brother James. Concerning this event, she thus writes; "I went to Wilmington, in Sussex, my dear brother James being married, and fixed as rector there. His wife, who was a Biddulph, was an interesting, intelligent, pious Christian, who had her own peculiar scruples of conscience, on various subjects; and very tender was my dear brother of her feelings on these points; so that the removal into his family was some relief to me. He affectionately enquired into my religious views, and sympathized in my distress.

I had sometimes secretly attended Friends' meetings, at Birmingham, in which I remember experiencing much brokenness of spirit; but while with my kind brother I attended his little church. The private, as well as the more public devotion to which I was witness wrought much consideration and deep inward thoughtfulness; especially as respected participating in what is termed the Sacrament, or the Lord's Supper, as it came in usual course to be administered by my brother. It had been, on former occasions, a

solemn ceremony of peculiar comfort to my longing soul; and I had much conflict and prayer that I might be satisfied whether the outward and visible sign was important to salvation. With reverence, deep humility, and fear, I received the bread and wine. I do not recollect that any observation was made on my being evidently agitated. I sought no human counsel, but the satisfactory abiding instruction on my own mind was, that the inward and spiritual grace, of which this was only the visible sign, must be something of a higher nature, not dependent upon uncertain means. The best of teachers was pleased to calm and quiet my mind on this important subject, and I no more repeated the ceremony; but these convictions and changes were no light matters to me."

Upon leaving home for Wilmington, Mary Capper resumed her journal, from which the following extracts are given:—

"Friday, November 9th, 1781.

Having passed a sleepless night I rose early, to go by the London coach; the morning was glorious, and the rising sun presented a beautiful autumnal prospect.

10th, Saturday. When we reached the Castle and Falcon, London, I was rejoiced to meet my brother John, who conducted me to Gracechurch Street, where my brother Jasper lives. He and Nancy expressed their satisfaction on seeing me, in terms the most affectionate, and my heart beat responses. I was surprised and pleased to meet

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with Miss Nicholls, whom I had known at Boulogne. I enjoyed a comfortable evening, and was relieved from all sense of fatigue by the kindness of my partial, indulgent friends.

11th. A seat being engaged for me in the Lewes coach, to set out early in the morning, it was judged best for me to sleep at the Adelphi Hotel, my brother William, accompanying me as protector.

12th. Monday. I was lucky in my company in the coach; only two gentlemen; one a Mr. Whitfield, resident at Lewes, from whom I received every possible civility during the journey; and upon our arrival at Lewes, he obligingly introduced me to his sister, a polite, genteel woman, to whose friendly attention I am greatly indebted. Being much in want of rest, I was prevailed on to accept a bed there.

13th. Rose comfortably refreshed, and after a good breakfast, and making the best acknowledgments I could, for my entertainment, I set out for Wilmington. I greatly admire the country; the views of the fine hills diffuse a calm, which induces sweet contemplation, and leads the mind to the Grand Source whence flows every pleasant stream. The beautiful valleys are a delightful contrast, and attract particular admiration. My appearance at Wilmington surprised Mrs. Capper and Miss Susan Bidulph,\* as they were not apprized of my arrival. My father and brother were gone to the seaside, and did not return till late. My Father

\* Afterwards S. Greaves, of Stanton, Derbyshire.

came loaded with sea-weeds, and other marine productions. When they perceived me, placed slyly in a corner, I was saluted with an appearance of joy on all sides. Miss Biddulph is very pleasing, and I have reason to think myself happily situated.

14th. In the night the wind was very high ; I like the awful sound, and find it pleasing music. A fine, calm morning. This place is delightful ; the hills are beautiful, even now ; covered with the finest verdure, and appear towering almost to the clouds. The north aspect commands a most extensive view ; part of Kent, the wilds of Sussex, &c. My father looks remarkably well and cheerful. We enjoyed a comfortable fireside in the evening ; my brother reading to us.

15th. The weather astonishingly fine and warm. Assisted Mrs. Capper to finish some necessary work ; am always pleased when I am considered of any use. Tasted the sweets of an hour's retirement ; then joined the fireside, and enjoyed the pleasure of friendly intercourse with a mind at liberty, glad, and confident in the living God.

16th. Walked with Mrs. Capper in the garden. I admire her many amiable qualities ; she has much genuine virtue, with an improved understanding, and rare acquirements. I anticipate the spring with pleasure. to explore with her, each opening beauty. Miss Biddulph, though not so dignified in deportment, is equally estimable. There is an interesting delicacy diffused over her whole person, with sweet manners, and unaffected piety.

21st. My father talks of leaving us to-morrow; we shall be sorry to part with him, and his employments turn greatly to advantage; the shady walk will be much improved by his labours.

22nd. The day fine, though cold. Rose early; my father set off between nine and ten o'clock: my brother accompanied him as far as Lewes." The original manuscript has a note affixed to this sentence; viz., "This was the last time I ever saw my dear father!"

"25th. A fine mild morning; travelled in idea with my father; admired with gratitude the beautiful scenes of nature.

27th. Monday. Mild and clear as summer; the sun shone on the tops of the hills, casting a dark shade on the vallies below; the scene was picturesque, and I enjoyed it with the calm satisfaction of a grateful heart. Rode with my brother to East Bourne. I was charmed with the country; riding on the Downs is pleasing beyond all that I could imagine; the air is, even now, quite fragrant with wild thyme, &c. We had an extensive prospect of rich pasturage, with small villages romantically situated; and a fine view of the sea.

December 4th. Read french; in my closet, read Boyle. With a thankful spirit, I have confidence in the living God; my soul resteth in his promises, and shall be satisfied. With hope and confidence, I will wait the appointed time. Be steadfast, O! my soul, for the Lord regardeth the sincerity of thy desire; weak in thyself, be strong in faith, and fear not!

February 1st, 1782. Mounted Windore Hill with my brother. I had no idea of the beautiful view which the hill affords; nor could I have imagined that deep snow and cold winds had such charms. Never let us complain that winter robs the plains of their beauty; each season is fraught with instruction and delight.

8th. Friday. Miss Susan Biddulph left us; my brother accompanies her to London; we cannot but be sensible of the loss of their society.

28th. Had a charming walk before breakfast; the sun shone gloriously, and almost every spray was vocal with the song of joyous birds. Is it possible that the midnight dance, or tiresome frolic, should exhilarate the spirits, or afford the sweet calm satisfaction which arises from the contemplation of nature? Surely no! My soul now expands and breathes in silence for the only state fitted to enjoy perfect beauty!

March 2nd. Saturday. Walked near two hours before breakfast. Sat a few minutes with our neighbour, Mrs. King. Poor woman! I am truly sorry for her; she has been afflicted with an ague for several months, and her children are in the same pitiable condition. Agues are frequent here, and very difficult to remove. The poorer people live low, and pay little attention to health; in general ruining their constitutions by drinking spirits. Gin is the universal liquor, and introduced at almost all tables; it is no unusual thing to see ladies swallow a glass or two of hollands!

10th. Sunday. Rose at seven; walked till nine. Went to church. Whom have I in heaven, but Thee, O! God; and there is none upon earth I would desire in comparison of Thee!

19th. Bear patiently the infirmities of others; Thou hast much to be borne with of other's!

27th. Retired with my mind disquieted. How many and various are the conflicts with busy passions! Folly and vanity rise up daily, and gain strength from our too feeble resistance. My King, and my God! to Thee I cry for strength. Humbled by a sense of my weakness, to whom can I apply but to the Fountain of Grace! still I have faith in his bounty. My soul waiteth for the living God; and when He shall have purified me by his Spirit, all shall be peace and joy! Let none trust in their own strength, but let all praise and extol the Lord.

April 1st. In pain most of the day, but was thankful for a calm fortitude of mind, that disposed me to submit with patience. In the day of trouble I will trust in the Lord my God. Had I the eloquence of angels, I would exhort all nations to trust in the living God. Though he correct, he will never forsake the faithful!

8th, Monday. Rose before seven; it was quite an effort, but I should be sorry to fall into my former custom, of losing in sleep many hours which I find, by experience, may be used with pleasure and advantage.

21st. Employed in preparing for my brother's

going to Cambridge; he thinks of being absent a month; we shall think it a long time. In the evening I retired to my closet, where I indulged the sweet satisfaction of contemplation; the beauties of nature presented themselves in an extensive view, and nature's God was the object of my grateful praise.

23rd. Sunday. Walked to Falkington with my brother. Had a letter from my friend Félicité Dupont. To-morrow we purpose going to Lewes.

27th. My stay at Lewes was longer than I expected, and I feel pleased to return to my favourite scenes. Lewes, though a pretty town, is not, in my estimation, comparable with Wilmington. The fashionable modes and ceremonies of the polite circles, give not the pure, simple delights arising from the study of nature; in the former pursuits, the mind seems carried from itself, and wanders in confused trifles; on the other hand, the glowing beauties of nature irresistibly lead to the great Almighty Power, whose wisdom and goodness are inexhaustible.

May 11th. Enjoyed my closet in the evening. It is wonderful that so few seem to be acquainted with the value of quiet.

18th My brother returned; our mutual satisfaction at meeting is easier imagined than described.

21st. Sunday. Spent some time in my closet. It will not be long ere the final end of all created things shall come. Watch therefore! be steadfast in prayer, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

August 6th. Tuesday. Dr. Dodson and Mr.



Turner dined with us. Mr. Turner spoke in high terms of a new botanical publication, by Curtis, embellished with beautiful plates ; and Dr. Dodson mentioned a design of Dr. Darwin, to publish a translation of Linnæus's botanical arrangement.

8th. We made considerable progress with the Grecian history ; and read a very curious article in a Review ; an essay on physiognomy, or the art of face reading, by Lavater, a German.

26th. Rebecca informs us that the *Magnanime*, in which our dear George sailed, has been engaged, for six hours, with a French vessel of equal force. We have received no satisfactory account, and the fate of our dear boy is unknown to us. The Most High guards him, and saves us from desponding fears.

26th. My mother and Miss Hubbersty unexpectedly arrived. We have the comfort of seeing my mother in perfect health, and with her usual serenity of aspect.

29th. Unwell and my spirits depressed. I earnestly wish to be patient, but I fail daily ; yet will I call upon my God, my strength and my only hope.

September 2nd. We had a delightful walk to the top of Windore ; my mother performed wonders ; as in general, she is but a poor walker, and I had scarcely an idea that she could ascend our hills. She was pleased with the view of the sea, and the vessels upon it, and with the extensive prospect.

4th. A melancholy account in the paper of

the Royal George being sunk in Portsmouth harbour, and upwards of nine hundred persons drowned; Admiral Kempenfelt among the number. A victualling sloop was also carried down in the vortex, and all on board perished.

9th. My mother received a letter from my brother William, with an account of his being fixed in a new situation. In the evening we walked up the hill; the weather was fine, and the sky beautiful, yet was my mind in a disposition not to be pleased. In vain do I search for the cause which frequently indisposes my whole frame, and gladly would I lay aside every unamiable propensity. Our happiness would be too great, should no internal difficulties arise. Perfect serenity and peace of mind are foretastes of future bliss, only permitted at seasons, to encourage our hope and strengthen our faith. Trials are necessary, that by faith and patience, we may obtain the prize of our high calling."

Although Mary Capper does not seem to have been fully aware of the cause of her frequent depression, during her mother's stay at Wilmington, it appears probable that no small part of it might be occasioned by the knowledge that her parents disapproved of the change of religious profession and practice which her brother Jasper had made, and to which her own convictions powerfully attracted her. Her father however made affectionate mention of Jasper in writing to William, as appears by the following extract of a letter to him :—

“ Birmingham, September 9th, 1782.

MY DEAR WILLIAM,

I cannot say but John's letter gave me some pangs for your disappointment, though I think you judged right in rejecting the offer at Norwich. Though a suspicious temper is a disgrace to human nature, yet as the world goes, it is prudent to be circumspect. It gives me pleasure that your undertaking is with the approbation of all your friends ; it was sure to have mine, if likely to be for your good. You may depend on your mother rendering you every service in her power, with the utmost pleasure. Jasper may be of service to you, and it gives me pleasure to find you speak so kindly of his brotherly love, &c. True affection, love, and blessings to you all, from, dear William,

Your most affectionate father,

WILLIAM CAPPER.”

In her journal Mary Capper continues :—

“13th. ‘Forsake all, and thou shalt find all ; leave thy inordinate desires, and thou shalt find rest.’ This is no easy task ; self will loudly plead her own cause ; but as we keep low, and attend to the voice of truth, there will be a forsaking of self, and a witnessing God to be all in all. There is a charm in the very dawns of virtue that irresistibly attracts our admiration, and leads sweetly on in the pursuit of true wisdom.

14th. Walked to Milton Farm, and found them preparing for their harvest supper. The

quantity provided on these occasions is really astonishing. We went to see our neighbour King's tables set out; they had two boiled rounds of beef, and several roasted pieces, two quarters of mutton and six legs of mutton; with six plum puddings. Their company consisted of men, women, and children.

26th. My mother and I went to Lewes.

27th. My mother left me there; she was in much better spirits than myself.

30th. We called at friend Rickman's at the Bridge; we also went to Lambert's, the portrait and landscape painter. Mrs. Lambert showed us the plates designed for the first number of Curtis's botanical work; they appear exceedingly well executed.

October 1st. I had a letter from my mother, who got safe to town, and found our friends well. My brother William is very desirous to have me with him. I am distressed at the thought of leaving Mrs. Capper, nor can I persuade myself that my poor abilities can be any advantage to my brother; however I am ready to try my best skill in his service.

6th. Sunday. Went to church. Reflected with gratitude that I had neither opportunity nor strong temptation to join the giddy crowds, who seem to live wholly strangers to the still, small voice, which is not to be heard in tumult and confusion.

8th. Letters from London. My brother expects me in a fortnight.

9th. Wednesday. We drank tea at a friendly

quaker's, and were treated with freedom and simplicity.

15th. I have fixed to be in London this day fortnight; with reluctance I leave these scenes, where I have felt calm, peaceful delight, and with satisfaction have contemplated the beauties of simple nature; but the pleasures of the mind are confined to no place; in every situation, I am persuaded the bountiful Hand that enriches the field and the grove, ever affords a subject for admiration, gratitude and praise.

17th. My brother went among the sick; though he cannot administer health, I hope the balm of comfort will be permitted to flow from his lips. The glad tidings of peace are sometimes suffered to reach the afflicted, through the faithful servants of the Lord.

Sunday, 27th October, 1782. The last day of my residence at Wilmington! Words would fail to describe my feelings!"

## CHAPTER IV.

RESIDENCE IN LONDON TILL 1788.—REMOVAL TO BIRMINGHAM. DEATH OF HER MOTHER IN 1793.

IN the sketch which Mary Capper subsequently gave of her early life, she remarks :

“ From the time that I went to live, with my brother William, in London, I regularly attended Friends’ Meetings ; not that I was acquainted with their peculiar religious views ; indeed there seemed to be a prohibition of aught but simple evidence and obedience. The experience of others did not seem to reach my case ; all was to be given up, that all things might be new ; and such were the sacrifices required, from time to time, as none can know or understand, save those who have been led in a similar way.

About this time, in consequence of my decided resolution to attend the meetings of Friends, my dear father (no doubt in faithfulness to his own religious views, and from the desire to rescue a poor child from apprehended error) requested me not to return to the parental roof, unless I could be satisfied to conform to the religious education which he had conscientiously given me. This, with a tender, heart-piercing remonstrance from my dear, dear mother, was far more deeply felt than I can describe ; and marvellous in my view, even to this day, was the settled, firm belief that I must follow on, to know the soul’s salvation for myself ; truly in a way that I knew not !”

In this time of deep affliction, she wrote, as follows, to her only sister,—

“February 11th, 1783.

MY VERY DEAR REBECCA,

Must I for ever give up the dear, pleasing hope of being received into the house and affections of my once kind, indulgent parents? Oh! my sister, will you, can you despise me? I have no firm consolation but in the belief that I am guided by a superior power. I have exerted every faculty of my mind; I have resolutely mortified my body, endeavouring to bring it into subjection, free from the influence of passion and deceiving sense; and I have a secret intimation that the kingdom of heaven is within us; that in the silence of the creature is the power of God made known.

O! my Rebecca, if you would examine the uniform desire of my life, the earnestness of my supplications, and my present wish of being humble, pure, wholly dependent upon God my Maker, without any confidence in man; if you would thus consider me, without prejudice, I think you would not, could not, reject me! Of my own willings, or self-abilities, I deserve little; but in my heart and understanding I submit to a perfect Teacher; and in his light is my life and my hope. Think not, my Rebecca, that I have contracted ideas, which circumscribe salvation to any particular sect. God forbid! my heart is contrariwise enlarged in universal charity. Let each be satisfied in his own mind, and the cen-

suers or applauses of multitudes can only be a secondary consideration, of no weight.

Would my dear parents deliberately compare my conduct with their own principles, I think they would not find that essential difference which a superficial view represents. I wish, and really mean to act as a reasonable creature; redeemed, and born to newness of life, through the death, sufferings, and resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; by whose intercession, and promised spiritual assistance, I am encouraged and strengthened to call, and wait upon the living God. If there is presumption and self-exaltation in this faith, I am utterly at a loss how to act; for I dare not trust in man, whose breath is in his nostrils. My hope and my confidence are alone in the Redeemer of his people.

No earthly satisfaction could equal that of being approved by my dear parents; but indeed Rebecca, I cannot—cannot act contrary to what I believe tends to my advancement in faithful obedience to the law of God; the law which I find written in my own heart; for I believe, from that law shall a man be judged. When faithfully followed it cannot, will not, lead him from the Supreme Good. Every line in Holy Writ tends to strengthen or encourage our hopes, in humble confidence in the One only Good; opening our eyes to the folly of trifling amusements, and to the vain fashions of the world. Farewell, my dear Rebecca! believe me, I never was more affectionately your sister, Mary.”



The foregoing letter appears to have been answered by the following from her mother.

“Birmingham, February 15th, 1783.

You have kept me in painful suspense for some time, by not answering a plain, simple question; that is, whether you wished ever to return, to give comfort to a poor afflicted parent, or not. You have now answered fully to your sister; but why trouble her with a repetition of the same, or to the same purport, that you had written from France? You did very well in not sending the letter you mention to have written me, if it run in the same strain, and I am inclined to believe it doth; for my present intention is, that I shall neither read nor hear any letter or writing that shall come from you to myself or others, if I can without difficulty avoid it; in consequence of which this probably may be the last time I shall trouble you; and this I intend to be very short; for what can be said to one under such strong, enthusiastic delusion, as to declare against all prescribed rules in worship, &c., and at the same time, hath entered into a Society who do not act, speak, or move, or even conduct the most trifling affairs, but by prescript? I mean, in anything that carries the form of religion; but you presume to have an immediate call, or direction from that Supreme Being, whose positive commandment you dare to break, for the sake of a few speculative opinions, made known to you by those whom you esteem; not by persuasion; no! for that way they disclaim, but by a far more sly and insinuating way.

O ! my child, I could tell you by what means they have worked on your judgment, but I forbear, as I have not a glimpse of hope that it would be to any good purpose. O ! how does my heart, as it were, die within me, when I think of the effect it will have on your poor father ! What would I give that it could be kept from him ! and that it may be, as long as possible, shall be my care ; for my firm belief is, that if he was to know the contents of your last letter, whilst he is under his present bodily infirmity, he would hardly long survive it ; but of what consequence is that to one who, I fear, fancies herself under conviction ! But do reflect a little, my dear child ; what is it that thou art called upon to do, or what to forego ? Our most fervent desire and prayer is that you, and the rest of our dear children, should, through the grace or light that is afforded us by our all-gracious God, worship Him in spirit and in truth ; without which, most certainly, our prayers become unprofitable, and only vain lip-labour. But there are some forms, you will say, that you cannot assent to ; I will admit it may be so, and perhaps there is no system at this time existing that is entirely perfect, but I firmly believe ours to come nearer to perfection than any other. You think otherwise ; .so did Naaman when he prayed, that when he was performing his duty in that state of life to which he was called, and bowed in the house of Rimmon, that in that thing the Lord would pardon him ; and the prophet said, ‘ Go in peace.’

Wednesday, Three o'clock. I wrote the above last night, after your poor father was gone to bed; I thought him better yesterday than for some time past; he wrote a letter to your brother John, and was in good spirits; but in the night was seized with a cold shivering, and hath ever since been very ill. He has not been up to-day, and I am now attending by his bedside; he is quiet, and seems more comfortable than he has been. The great disposer of all events only knows what may happen; but whatever it may be, I earnestly pray that he will permit me such a measure of divine grace, and assurance, as shall enable me to bear, in a Christian manner, whatever may be laid upon me.

I have run on much more than I, at first, thought to have done, when I sat down to write. I intended it to be but a very few lines. My heart still dictates much more, but I will forbear, as they will not let my child off; one convinced member, as they term it, is of more esteem in that Society than twenty born and bred in it; but I have done; farewell! may you be happy, whatever be allotted for the short remains of your mother's days.

REBECCA CAPPER.

One other word will drop from my pen, in spite of me. Return; return, my child; and I will receive thee with more joy than I did the first moment I beheld thee!"

Deeply was her mother to be felt for, and

great was the anguish with which this letter was perused ; indeed this period of Mary Capper's life was seldom, if ever, alluded to by her without much emotion. The conflict was distressing ; yet was she strengthened to persevere in what was clearly manifested to be the path of duty : and although her father recovered from that attack of illness, yet, as he did not allow her to return home, and as his last illness was both sudden and short, she was deprived of the consolation of again seeing him, and of receiving from his own lips, an assurance of his affection. It may easily be conceived that this was indescribably trying to her ; but she was enabled to lift up her heart, and to commit her cause unto Him, for whom she was thus forsaking her earthly home and parents ; and He was pleased to speak peace to her afflicted soul ; and in his own good time, to grant her the hundredfold, even in this life. The following memoranda, and letter, will bear witness to the state of her mind at this period, and for some time after.

“ London, 6th of 9th month, 1783.

Praise the Lord, O ! my soul, and be exceeding glad in the God of thy salvation ; for He hath done great things for thee, and wonderful is His power ! He hath plucked thy feet out of the mire and clay, and hath set them upon a rock ; the only true foundation, throughout all ages to the end of the world ! My spirit is exceedingly glad that the Lord hath heard the prayers of his handmaiden, and in great mercy, granted my

earnest request. He hath strengthened me to part with all the nearest and dearest of his gifts; to sit loose from the tenderest connexions, that I may be free to fulfil the great command of loving the Lord my God, with all my heart, with all my mind, and with all my strength.

O! let none think the terms hard! our God is a God of infinite mercy; He is not a hard master, reaping where He has not sown! My soul can testify of his bounty; and my desire, and my glory, is to adore, to praise, and to magnify his holy name! Amen! Amen!

24th of 4th month, 1784.

There seems a state brought to the view of my mind, as being attainable even during our sojourn in this world; a state free from sin, when Christ shall dwell in us, and we in Him. The righteousness which he worketh in us must be perfect; every will and working of the creature being laid low, God shall reign over all, blessed for ever! In this state of freedom from the dominion of sin, temptations, and trials may, and assuredly will come; but as we keep close to the light of Christ, inwardly manifested, I believe we shall be preserved blameless; without spot or blemish, to the honour of our great and holy teacher; to whom be ascribed power, majesty, and praise, now and for ever. Amen!

22nd of 7th month, 1784.

The ways of the Lord are wonderful and past finding out. O! let none be weary of waiting

upon Him, for He will be gracious to all those who faithfully call upon Him! My earnest cries have gone forth, and I believe the Lord hath heard the voice of my prayer. My groans and my tears have not been hid from Him. Glory, praise, and honour be to His name! Let the creature lie low, that the Creator may be all in all for ever and ever. Amen!

14th of 12th month, 1784.

O! how pure, how perfect is the truth as it is in Jesus! Keep to it, O! my soul; turn neither to the right hand nor to the left, but press forward, through all difficulties; for the light of Christ within thee will break forth into perfect day, if on thy part thou art steady, undaunted and of a right faith!—O! my God, help me! leave me not to the delusions, the buffetings of my soul's enemy! Keep me in the patience, that I may watch Thy coming, and be found of Thee. Thou art worthy to be waited upon, O! Lord, my God! in Thee is my hope, and my trust for ever!

As rest to the weary traveller, so is true silence to the deeply exercised mind."

M. C.—To W. B.

"11th of 3rd mo., 1785.

DEAR FRIEND,

With propriety I believe I may use the term, dear friend, as all in the truth seem dear to me. Since our conversation this afternoon, I have had to remember, in a very lively manner,

the Lord's dealings with my soul in early life. I was at times visited with a sweet sense of purity and truth; but from my situation and mode of education, I was at a loss how to come at that which my soul seemed to see at a distance. For several years the prospect was, as it were, closed, or very rarely opened. I thought myself a useless being, and I believe sometimes almost repined that I was born; but about the twenty-third year of my age, the Lord graciously re-visited my soul; and it was, indeed, as the dry and barren wilderness, refreshed with dew. I think I cannot forget the sweet incomes of Divine favour. The whole creation seemed new to me; all things spoke the love and mercies of a gracious God. Scarcely a day passed over without some sweet openings, some renewal of my Great Master's condescension. I thought myself the happiest of human creatures. Thus delectably did the God of all my mercies allure me into the wilderness! Every required sacrifice seemed ready prepared by His own hand, and I had only to wait His own time. Happy have I thought it, that he was pleased to stay my mind!—When my dear, loved parents expressed their concern at my change, it was suggested to me, that for a time, it was my place to be subject in all things lawful, and way would be made where I saw no way; and far beyond my expectation, this has indeed been verified. But what seems more immediately to dwell upon my mind to communicate to thee is, that I have, in my measure, found that the Lord's merciful dealings

stir up the envy and malice of our grand enemy, when our gracious Father is pleased to hide His countenance and try our faith, after having sweetly led us in the right way. Then is the enemy as one triumphing over his prey. O! how is he permitted to buffet, to terrify the poor, timid soul! My mind has sometimes been as one almost without hope; and had not the hand of the Lord been underneath, I had surely fainted; but my spiritual eye was led to retrace the paths I had trod, and I was favoured to see the Lord's dealings, and that tribulations were appointed to the faithful followers of a crucified Jesus.

With affectionate wishes for thy prosperity in the truth,

I am, sincerely,

MARY CAPPER."

The following brief remark is among her memoranda:—

"On the 2nd of the 4th month, 1785, my dear father died, without my seeing him! I heard that he enquired with affection for a pair of garters which I had knit for him, and that he spoke with tenderness of me. O! this was like precious balm!"

No special mention is made of a change in her mother's feelings towards her, but there is reason to believe that she gradually, from the time of her widowhood, became reconciled to her daughter's proceedings; being doubtless convinced of the rectitude of her motives; so that the way was at length made for Mary's returning to the parental dwelling.



It appears that Mary Capper was received into membership with the Society of Friends about the year 1785, also that she spoke as a minister in their religious meetings soon after that event. With respect to the latter circumstance, she writes :—" It sometimes arose in my mind, that possibly I might have to tell unto others how I had been taught, and kept from the broad way of destruction ; and a few words arising, with something of unusual power, I think at the Peel meeting, I stood up and spoke them, and felt very quiet ; nor did I anticipate that such a thing might ever be required again ; and thus I was led on, from time to time, not knowing but each time might be the last. About 1788, I came to reside with my dear mother, at Birmingham, and she did not object to my regularly attending Friends' meetings." The occasion of her leaving London, and going to reside with her mother, appears to have been the indisposition of the latter, and is briefly alluded to in the following extract of a letter to her from her brother William.

" London, 17th February, 1788.

MY VERY DEAR SISTER,

I cannot delay writing to you, since you say that my silence adds to the painful sensations of your heart. Indeed, my dear Mary, if I could write anything that would alleviate one anxiety of thy dear breast, I would not let a post go without a letter. You will be glad to hear that all things in the family go on as though you

were present. I called this afternoon in Berkeley Square; uncle John has had a severe fit of the gout. I spent Friday evening with Jasper and Nancy; they are well and comfortable. How could I write so much, and not once mention our dear mother! I am much grieved at the account you give of her, and hope to have a better in your next. Comfort her, my dear girl! give her my sincere duty and affection, and tell her I am happy that I had such a sister as you, to send to her consolation. Remember me in affection to brother Samuel, to his wife, and to George.

I am, dear Mary,

Thy truly affectionate brother,

WILLIAM CAPPER."

Though very little allusion to the circumstance is found in any of Mary Capper's papers, it seems scarcely right wholly to omit the mention of a yet more costly sacrifice than any that she had previously made, which was called for at her hands, before she quitted London as her home. She had formed a strong attachment to a young man Friend, to whom she expected to be married, when she discovered that he did not set a high value on his membership in the Society of Friends, and that he was inclined for more liberty in practice than their principles allowed of. This was a most painful discovery to her; and as farther communication with him proved to her, that he was one who could not fully enter into her religious feelings and views, she felt it to be

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her duty to break off the connection, though it nearly cost her her life; and she could never afterwards entertain the prospect of matrimony.

The following extract from a letter of her mother's, will show how changed were her feelings towards Mary, and towards Jasper and his wife.

“ Birmingham, June 16th, 1788.

MY DEAR MARY,

In answer to your last, I feel truly concerned that poor Smallwood\* has fresh appearances of his disorder; and sorry I am at the disappointment which his parents must suffer. If necessary I advise, by all means, that you should attend him; for whatever my own views may have been, I readily give them all up, for the good of this poor afflicted child, and the comfort of his father and mother, to whom give my most tender love.

With respect to the other proposal that your brother and sister have signified to you, I believe the bent of your own mind must determine you; this I verily believe: that the goodness of your own heart will incline you to undertake that which is the most needful for your friends.

I have only to add that (wherever you may fix yourself for a time) whilst you remain single, I would have you to look upon my habitation, so long as I live, as your fixed and settled home. Thank your brother Jasper, in my name, for his

\* The eldest son of J. and A. Capper.

attention to your aunt Chase. Tibbatts\* was here on Sunday; he says Rebecca is well.

Believe me, dear Mary,

Your affectionate mother,

REBECCA CAPPER."

Mary Capper does not appear to have kept a journal regularly till after the death of her mother, but a few remarks were penned occasionally; and sometimes the petitions of an exercised soul. The following will, it is believed, be acceptable to the reader.

" 10th of 6th month, 1789.

My soul! wait thou upon God; although heaviness and insensibility may perplex and distress thee, yet be not dismayed, nor weary of well-doing; for assuredly they that wait upon the Lord, that patiently and quietly wait, shall renew their strength. They shall mount upwards, they shall rise as upon eagles' wings, they shall be raised above this grovelling earth; but it may be needful that they should feel how necessary it is to wait upon the Lord, and that with long patience and deep humility. O! Lord my God! if it be thy holy will, be pleased at this time to increase my faith and my patience, that I may more perfectly know and wait upon Thee.

11th month, 1790.

Thou gracious fountain of all our mercies, O! be pleased to look down upon us, and save us

\* The husband of her sister Rebecca.

from our sins ! Jesus, the Redeemer, has died that we might be perfected through his atoning sacrifice ; let us not, then, make his sufferings of none effect to us ward, by an evil heart of unbelief. My soul feels a weight of sorrow for my own insensibility ; and many, very many, are my imperfections, particularly, O ! my God ! (may I call Thee my gracious Father ! ) I have to lament at this day, a proneness to impatience and frowardness of spirit. Gracious Father ! I would confess my sins that I may be healed ; but Thou knowest all my thoughts, and the devices of my heart ; therefore, with all my burden of infirmities, weakness and folly, I bow at the footstool of thy mercy, and hope to be kept in patient humility, waiting thy time to deliver me from my soul's enemies ; for the power is thine !

1791.

At this period of my life, my faith is, that there is one God, who is supremely good, and doeth good continually ; that at sundry times and in divers manners, throughout all ages of the world, He has been pleased to manifest Himself to the sons and daughters of men ; that in this our day, He shows Himself in the glorious dispensation of the gospel ; having sent his own Son to be made flesh, and dwell among men for a time, in an earthly body.

Though mysterious his death and suffering, I believe that Christ died to redeem us from sin ; and that, in and through Him, believers have access to the throne of grace.

8th month, 1791.

My faith being renewed in Christ Jesus, the Son and express image of the living God, I bow in humility and hope, at the footstool of mercy, looking for redemption and remission of sin. O! the malady of the soul! how foul it is!

There is not, in nature, an antidote to so great evil; but the Lord of life and glory came down from heaven, from the bosom of his Father, to recover lost mankind, and throw consolatory hope into the cup of human woe; made a bitter cup by man's disobedience and pride.

Gracious, holy Father! open the blind eye! unstop the deaf ear! that we may see and acknowledge the mystery of thy condescending love!"

Towards the end of the year 1798, Mary Capper appears to have been absent from Birmingham, attending upon a sick friend; during this period she received the following letters from her mother.

"Birmingham, 18th September, 1793.

MY DEAR MARY,

I hope they will not remove the young woman till the doctor thinks it may be done with safety. Don't be uneasy on my account. I continue tolerably well, when I am quiet; and what a blessing it is that I have it in my power to be so!

I am not so much alone as you may think, for my neighbours are kind in calling on me. Your

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brother George dines with me most days, comes home in good time at night, and often looks in, during the day.

Farewell, my dear Mary ! I shall be truly glad to receive you, when it is proper for you to come home ; but, I am not impatient.

Believe me, your sincerely affectionate mother,  
REBECCA CAPPER."

" Colmore Row, 23rd September, 1793.

MY DEAR MARY, \*

I am well pleased that you think you may leave Park Gate, with safety to your patient. W. Shorthouse tells me he intends setting out to-morrow to conduct you. He did intimate, some time ago, a thought of taking you to Liverpool ; now if circumstances coincide, I wish you to embrace the opportunity, as another may not offer. Don't hasten home at all on my account ; I seem at this moment quite well. I was out only once yesterday, for the weather was rainy, and the wind very cold. I was very much gratified, and I hope edified, by a discourse on the words of St. James, ' Let patience have her perfect work.'

I am, dear Mary,

Your truly affectionate mother,  
REBECCA CAPPER."

Rebecca Capper died in the 12th month, 1793 ; but no particulars are known of the illness that terminated her life, or of her closing moments.

## CHAPTER V.

LABOURS IN THE MINISTRY FOR 33 YEARS—VISIT TO  
WARWICK JAIL—EXTRACTS FROM DIARY, &c.

FROM the time of her mother's death to the year 1826—viz., for thirty-three years—Mary Capper appears to have devoted herself to the service of her Lord and Master, travelling much, as a minister, in various parts of this country. Her ministry was sound and edifying; having herself largely partaken of the conflict between flesh and spirit, she was often concerned to encourage the sincere-hearted patiently to submit to such proving exercises, and to look for effectual help to the Lord Jesus, their Redeemer and Saviour.

During her travels, she endeavoured to make her visits acceptable to all, by entering into their trials and assisting them in every suitable way. She especially loved the young, and one of her usual accompaniments on these occasions was a collection of pleasing and instructive books, of which she freely allowed them the use; so that the little ones, as well as some farther advanced, welcomed her approach with joy; and we believe that this was one secret of her power to lead them to love Him who had conquered her heart, in her early days, and in whose service it was her delight to engage.

She was ever ready to sympathize with the afflicted, and she not unfrequently felt a desire



to go and visit those in prison. For this purpose she went to Warwick, where the jail was at that time under the care of an excellent governor, and his remarkable wife, Esther Tatnal; one who devoted herself to the good of the prisoners, and rejoiced when they received visits from such as felt a real concern for their salvation.

Mary Capper writes.—

“ Warwick, 18/12/1819.

I came in simple obedience to apprehended Christian duty, on the 9th, and was affectionately received by Hannah Evans, whose mind seemed prepared to feel with me. William Whitehead, a kind, valuable elder of this meeting, entered into my views, and, being well acquainted with the jailor and his wife, he easily obtained access for me to the prison. The men were all placed in the chapel; a great calm mercifully spread over us, and supplication was offered that heavenly mercy might, in truth, be felt to be over all. The stillness was admirable, and we were favoured to feel a measure of our Heavenly Father's love to be extended to us, wherein help and comfort were offered to the longing soul. We were afterwards introduced to the women; it was an affecting time, and many tears were shed. I do believe divine mercy was near to us, and I know that Christian good-will flowed toward this unhappy, misguided part of our fellow-creatures. How marvellous is the love of God! how it would gather all!”

The following account of the visit to the female prisoners was sent anonymously to Mary Capper; it was written in a letter to a friend of hers, by a person who was present.

“ Visit paid by a female Friend to Warwick County Jail.

December, 1819.

This person, who had a private interview, about two months since, with the servant that murdered her mistress, is one of the Society of Friends. Last week she paid a visit to the female prisoners, and you must set her before you in a dark brown gown, a handkerchief pinned close up to the chin, and a plain muslin cap, covered with a black silk hood. There were thirty persons assembled, who rose up to receive her, and remained standing till she began to pray, kneeling. She then sat down, with her eyes fixed on the ground, as if in deep thought, and rose, saying nearly the following words: ‘ This silence, no doubt, will be incomprehensible to your minds, but it is nevertheless useful. I wish to check your busy, active imaginations, to be silent, and to think ; to consider your past ways and your present situation, with all that belongs to you, temporally and spiritually ; to remember the great God, who, although a God of power and justice, is also a God of mercy ; who will hearken to your prayers, if offered with unfeigned repentance, through faith in his Son Christ Jesus. Think of your sins with that humiliation which becomes us all, but particularly those in

your unhappy situation, who are placed here under locks, bolts, and bars, for having offended against the laws both of God and man. In the world you have practised deceit, and sought a refuge in lies; and are you happy? You have coveted and taken what was not your own; and are you happy? No! Yet you thought you should be, or you would not have done these things; you see then that you were mistaken. I pity your mistake; and, as a fellow-pilgrim in the journey of life, earnestly tell you that there is no happiness on earth but in that obedience which is the evidence of our gratitude to God the Father, and faith in Him, and in the merits and sufferings of Jesus Christ his son.

Many of you have been tempted to do wrong through poverty, distress, and bad company; and when you return into the world at large, as I trust many of you will, may you remember what before brought upon you sorrow and degradation; and never fail to pray for the Grace of God, to God, to enable you to forsake your evil ways; that by honesty, and staying at home, not going from house to house hearing and telling lies, you may obtain kind friends, and be happy by leading a new life. I warn you against hardening and encouraging one another in vice while you remain here, by laughing at sin and making light of your crimes; but may the care bestowed on you by the excellent mistress of this establishment, who is equally earnest with myself for your souls' welfare, be hereafter rewarded by the knowledge that sinners have been turned from the evil of

their ways, and that you can say, with humble thankfulness of heart, Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name!’

She then shook hands with all the prisoners, and addressed them individually. To the murderer she said, ‘May God Almighty bring conviction to thy soul!’ and I could not help addressing my mite of exhortation to her, by begging of her to improve her mind. The individual spoke for an hour and half, so you will readily believe that this is only a very small part of what she uttered, but I have endeavoured to recollect the heads of the exhortation.”

Such as may desire to see other particulars of the various labours of Mary Capper are referred to the larger Memoir of her Life. Here it may be enough to say, that she was very diligent in preaching Christ, both among those of her own religious Society and among others, so long as bodily strength was granted; and that, when this gradually failed, she remained among her friends and neighbours, a cheering example of Christian faith and love; freely contributing to the comforts of others, from her own small income, and enlivening by her correspondence those whom she had no longer the ability personally to visit.

On her last journey, with certificate, she appears to have discontinued her diary, from which the concluding remarks are subjoined; also an extract from a letter to one of her nieces, written before she reached her home.

“Leicester, 1826.

9 mo. 3rd. First-day. A day of much exertion. In the morning meeting there was an earnest pleading with those of our religious Society, that the light, the life, and the power of godliness, might shine with increasing brightness amongst us; that an upright, conscientious dealing in all our concerns, our consistency and genuine plainness throughout our life and manners might show forth to others that we were taught in the school of Christ. In the afternoon many of the neighbours sat with us, when the universality of the mercy and love of our Almighty Father was feebly set forth.

11th. Preparing to leave my kind friends here, with the intention of holding a meeting at Hinckley. I was favoured with an opportunity for freely communicating, to a young medical man, some impressions on my mind, which appeared to be well received; this was an unexpected relief, and confirmed me in the persuasion that it is well to wait, in the patient belief that for every right thing, there is a right time.

12th. Favoured with quietness in looking toward my departure; and, before leaving, had an opportunity of religious retirement with the servants, to my satisfaction. I feel for servants.

13th. Ann Heaford kindly accompanied me to the Crown, at Hinckley. She has long been acquainted with the landlady of this large, well-regulated establishment, who seemed to consider it a privilege to spend part of the evening with us.

14th. We had her company at our scripture reading, after breakfast, to our comfort. Some sober people attended the meeting, and our religious principles, as founded on the gospel of life and salvation, through Jesus Christ, were in measure set forth. After parting from my friends in tenderness of spirit, I came to Coventry, having accomplished my engagement."

TO HER NIECE.

"Warwick, 24/9/1826.

Thou mayst surely think that I have lingered on my way when thou seest this date; but I believe I may venture to say, I could not make haste. My attention was turned to the poor and almost unknown ones, in solitary dwellings and lonely cottages. O! how condescending goodness shines, at times, like the enlivening sun, upon the penitent, humble, hidden Christian believer! The retrospect of such times as these, during my journey, is consoling and encouraging; and now, at the close of this engagement, reverence, tenderness, and lowliness of mind, are the sweet reward of this little dedication. It is enough! I ask no more.—MARY CAPPER."

The following reflections will show how clear and bright her mind continued.

"Birmingham, 6 mo., 1834.

After a considerable lapse of time, now in the eightieth year of my age, yet a sojourner and a

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pilgrim, pressing forward as not having attained all that my soul longeth after, I have this testimony to bear. Being lively, active, and volatile in my early years, I account it not one of the least of many mercies that my natural frame was feeble, and that I was sometimes much reduced by sickness. At these seasons, (O! marvellous mercy!) I was favoured with much tenderness of spirit, and shed secret, soothing, precious tears, in an indescribable sense that God was very good, and that He saw me; and I think I did breathe the prayer that I might not be left to my own guidance.

When sin and sinfulness were set before me, in the times of my folly, and I felt not the sweet, gentle balm of our Heavenly Father's favour, I did inwardly mourn, and did ignorantly, if not sinfully, wish that I had never been born. For many years, under a variety of outward changes, the secret, progressive work, (may I not say the genuine power of pure religion,) was preparing the way for clearer views respecting the soul's salvation. In these babe-like days, whatever I found to obstruct daily prayer—lowly supplication at the throne of mercy—seemed in my view sinful, and must be overcome. Verily, I have found it, and I do still find it, a wrestling warfare! The new birth is a marvellous work; a complete spiritual creation, with all things new, is not wrought by the reasoning powers of the natural man.

God the Father reveals the Son in us, as the light, the life, and the way; and gives us power

to believe in Him, as also the atoning sacrifice for sin, whereby we have access to a reconciled God, and universal Father. This spiritual view of salvation, as set forth in the Scriptures, and abundantly testified by the faithful of former generations; this atoning sacrifice—this way of redemption (begun, carried on, and perfected for me, and in me,) is the rock and ground of my Christian faith, and of my hope of acceptance, when this mortal shall put on immortality. My simple, yet reverent, testimony is to the marvellous love of God in Christ Jesus, as the guide of my youth, and as the staff of lengthened years, to those who acknowledge Him in all their ways. My heart rests in the belief that these will not be left to perish through ignorance. Obedience is the test of our sincerity. Acknowledge God in all thy ways, and he will direct thy steps aright, from youth to old age.

MARY CAPPER."

"Fragment on Prayer; addressed to a friend.

11th month, 1835.

With diffidence, as ever becomes me, I am willing to attempt expressing my ideas on the subject alluded to in our late conversation. I am aware that my understanding is very limited, but, I think, my simple views are not irreconcilable with precept and example in the inspired records. Can there be anything more imperative than the command, 'Watch and pray!' or any language more sweet and encouraging than, 'Pray unto thy Father, who seeth in secret!'



Doubtless Christians should live in the spirit of prayer; It is the Christian's vital breath; and marvellous is the privilege unto this day and hour, of communion with the Almighty Power, God over all, who breathed that breath of life whereby we became living souls! By the same Almighty Power we are kept from the path of destruction.

Sweet is the inviting language of our Redeemer, who has cast up a new and consecrated way, by which we have access to the Mercy Seat, 'When ye pray,' said he, 'say, Our Father!' Glorious privilege, that, while clothed with human nature, feeling and mourning our omissions and our commissions, we may 'Kneel before the Lord our Maker,' in prostration of body, soul, and spirit! Although utterance may fail, there is an availing sigh, a tear of contrition, and a Spirit, better than our own, helping our infirmities! I allude not to any forms, but to the real, humble breathings of the soul, athirst for the living God.

MARY CAPPER."

She continued occasionally to write notes to her relations and friends, as long as ability remained for this intercourse, which she highly valued.

The following is to a niece.

"Birmingham, 18th 1st mo., 1840.

I do desire gratefully to acknowledge the mercy that produces so much interest in what

concerns my welfare. It is marvellous in my view; and, in my present weak estate, I cleave to the Power that thus condescends to uphold me, and to spread the feeling of sympathy far and wide. My bodily frame is in a very debilitated state; but, when the cheering sunbeams break through the mist, I almost long to be in the air, and again to be privileged to meet my fellow-christian professors, and unite in waiting upon the Lord.

M. C."

She did not again rise much out of the state of feebleness which she here describes, but she continued to enjoy, during the remaining years of her protracted life, a comfortable degree of health, and was capable, to the last, of enjoying the society of her friends, to whom she was very affectionately attached. Her friends also greatly enjoyed being with her, as the happy and holy state of her mind might well be described, by the word, heavenly; and its genial influence could not but be felt by those about her.

The following was one of her last little addresses to her niece, who had long been her constant correspondent:—

"Birmingham, 9th 1 mo., 1841.

MY BELOVED NIECE,

Mercy sees fit to add another opening year to my long life. O! may the refining process go on, to perfect that which is still wanting! I crept out to meeting on First-day morning, and

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was not so faithful as I possibly ought to have been ; not from actual unwillingness, but from very weakness ; but, with gratitude may I express it, enduring goodness clothed my spirit with a lowly calm. What condescending tenderness and compassion !”

In a letter from James Backhouse to some of her relations, he says :—

“ York, 18th 2nd mo., 1842.

MY DEAR COUSINS,

I do not recollect that, in my last, I mentioned your aged relative Mary Capper, who appeared to me much enfeebled. She spoke of the approach of her end, as feeling an earnest desire to depart and be with her Saviour, but said that she could nevertheless say, ‘not my will but thine be done,’ and that she had many comforts to be thankful for, of the least of which she was unworthy. She feelingly expressed her sense of helplessness, and of dependence on divine support ; and her heart seemed overflowing with love to her friends.

She is an encouraging example of the power of religion in old age ; and, while her heart expands in Christian love toward all, she retains a clear and strong attachment to those views, or I might more properly say to those experiences, of Christianity to which true Friends have, through faith, attained. I thought this little notice of your honourable relation was due to you, and, should I see her no more, to her memory.”

James B. afterwards made the following addition to his remarks:—

“In the course of conversation she informed me that she had adopted the principle of total abstinence as regards intoxicating liquors; that, though, on the first mention of the subject she had doubted its propriety, yet, on reflecting upon it, and considering the numbers led away into inebriety, and that all these began their course of drunkenness by taking intoxicating liquors in what had been thought to be moderation, she came to the resolution that no one should be able to plead her example for taking them at all. At the time she left them off, she was upwards of eighty years of age, and in the practice of taking a single glass of wine daily with her dinner; and, having been for many years unable to take animal food, this glass of wine had been thought almost essential to her existence; especially as she had been accustomed to it from an early period of her life. She told me that she expected to have something to suffer, in making this change, and that she probably might have to endure a greater sense of feebleness during the remainder of her days; but the welfare of those by whom she was surrounded, and on whom her example might have some influence, she considered to be of much greater importance. On making the trial she was however agreeably disappointed; for, though she felt some languor for a few days, she soon became sensible of an increase of strength, and was more vigorous without the wine than she

had been with it; so that she had cause to commemorate the goodness whereby she had been enabled to make this little sacrifice. And I believe that her example in this respect, as well as her Christian practice exhibited in a great variety of other points, had a beneficial influence on many."

Mary Capper continued much in the same state till she entered her ninety-first year. In the 5th month, 1845, she had a troublesome cough, yet she continued to go into the air, and was able to attend meetings, in which she sometimes addressed her friends in encouraging language, and, on first-day, the 18th, she especially mentioned the dear children in her ministry. The next day her medical attendant requested that she would remain in bed, with which she reluctantly complied. Indeed, so unconscious was she of the extent of her own feebleness, that she wished to rise and go to meeting on the 21st. The next day fever increased, and her breathing became much affected, so as to alarm the kind friends who surrounded her. One of them gives the following account of the closing scene. "She seemed peculiarly peaceful, and full of love and gratitude. The exclamation, 'Goodness, mercy, and power,' was frequently on her lips. In the evening she took leave of the person under whose roof she resided, evidently under the idea that it might be a last farewell, expressing her desire that a blessing might attend the family, for their kindness.

Previous to settling for the night, she requested her faithful attendant to read in the Scriptures to her, as usual. The 14th chapter of John came in course, which was very congenial to her feelings, and she said that she could not have heard a more beautiful chapter, exclaiming, 'O! how beautiful!' to go to a mansion prepared for us,' and she afterwards appeared to be fervently engaged in silent prayer. She then spoke of her unworthiness; that she had no merit of her own, but that it was all of the Lord's mercy.

During the night she was much engaged in prayer, and the words, O, Father! often escaped her lips. She remarked to her servant, that she would be rewarded for her affectionate kindness to her, both here and in heaven.

To her last moments, love was the covering of her spirit, and she continued to recognise her friends, and to manifest it to them. A feeling of great solemnity was over those who were privileged to be present at the close of the life of this devoted servant of the Lord, which took place about eleven o'clock in the forenoon. Having done her day's work in the day-time, she was ready to accept the gracious invitation, and to enter into the joy of her Lord."

In reviewing the long life of this dear friend, the mind is powerfully impressed with the truth of the Scripture declaration, "Him that honour-eth me, I will honour;" for we see it verified in every stage of her course. She sought to honour her Lord in all things, and He dignified her with

his gifts and graces, and enabled her to glorify Him while on earth; preparing her, through his redeeming love and mercy, to celebrate his praise for ever in heaven.

May it be thus with us all.

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Harrison Penney, Printer, Darlington.













